THE POETRY OF FLIGHT, BY SELDEN RODMAN

The Saturday Review of Literature

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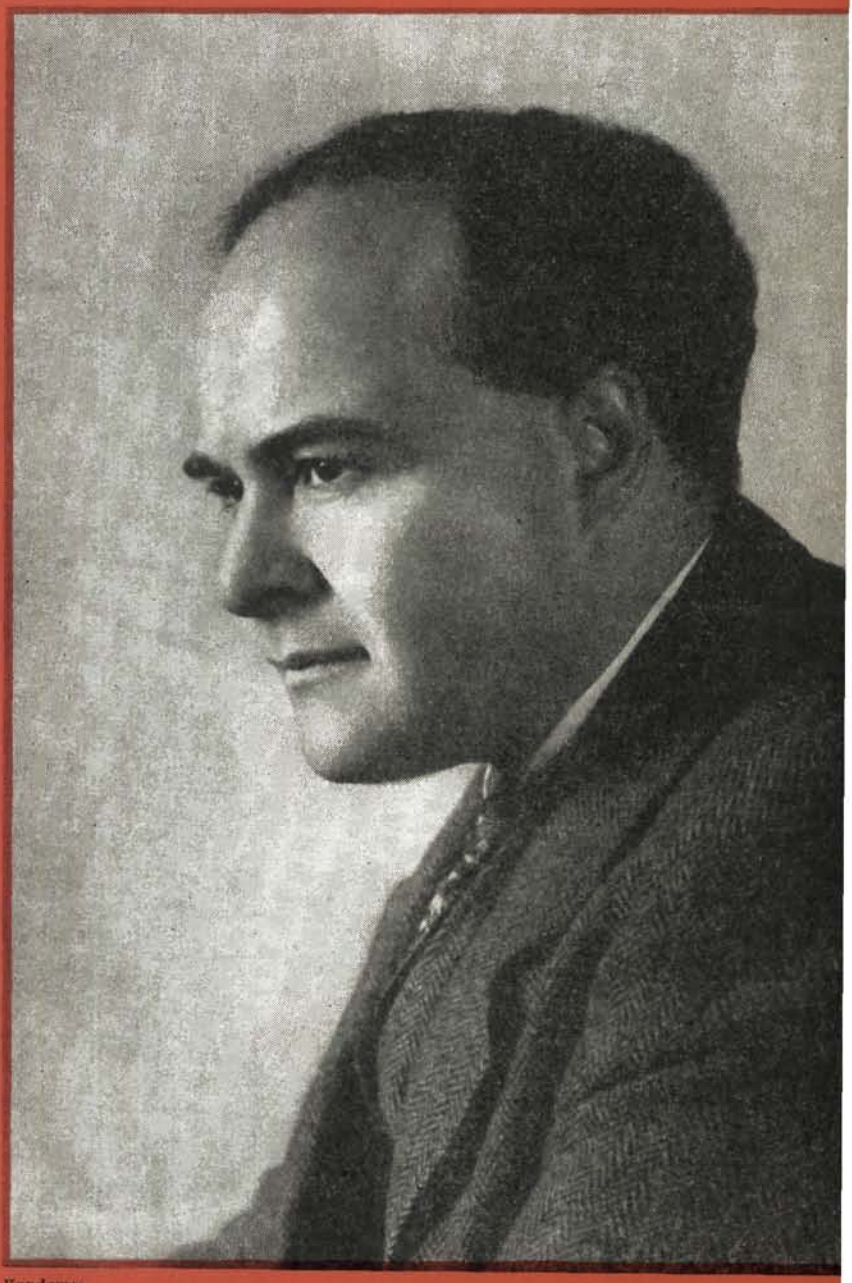

Vandamm

GARRETT MATTINGLY has written an admirable book in an admirable tradition—the life of the first wife of Henry VIII of England . . . *(See page 3)*

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The Saturday Review of Literature

The Poetry of Flight

SELDEN RODMAN

THE poetry of flight, unlike the poetry of the sail or the wheel, has not had time in which to develop gradually. It is being forced from us with a terrible urgency, though less than forty years have passed since the first flight. A new field of mechanical mastery has opened up; but that has happened before without appreciably broadening man's horizon or deepening his spiritual perspective. It is rather that profoundly in the consciousness of the race the idea of flight is associated with human aspiration and release from physical limitations. While now, on the very threshold of achievement, the dream becomes a nightmare threatening an awful vengeance for its perversion; and in desperation the soul of man reaches backward for the untarnished symbol of his hope.

To be sure, there has always been the bird, and the poetry of the bird, but our concern is for a larger field in which everyone who writes is a pioneer. Perhaps even a new poetry of the bird lies ahead of us.

Has it ever occurred to poets that a bird's blood has more red corpuscles per ounce than any other animal's? "There is a complete separation of pure and impure blood in the bird's heart," writes Gordon Aymar in "Bird Flight," "another departure from early reptilian life and another factor contributing to intensity and vigor of life. This high pitch to which it is tuned perhaps accounts for the richness of its song." The torpedo body of the swift, the streamlined "high aspect ratio" wing of the duck hawk, the gull so perfectly designed for gliding, the quail and grouse for hedgehopping, the amphibian penguin, and the engine-crowded hummingbird may well inspire the poets of the future to a kind of bird-poetry very different from the "Ode to the Skylark." What man-made machine will ever achieve the complex perfection of even the goose's wing, guided by its 12,000 muscles? And how good it is for our urban, mechanical arrogance to be told by Lieutenant Commander Graham that ages before the Handley-Page with its slotted airfoils, the eagle in its low-speed glides increased the angle of incidence by exactly similar automatic anti-stalling devices!

But if we were confined to the bird or the plane in our search for the poetry of flight, we would not have to search widely—or deeply. Fortunately there have been men in every age who considered flight possible. The gods flew, not to mention the demons, and was not man compounded of both? Quetzalcoatl, the departed blond helper of the Aztecs (who was to return later in such ironically destructive human shape) was the God of the Air. What child has not thrilled to the possibilities of the magic carpet and the enchanted Persian horse in the Arabian Nights? and was it accidental that the egg of the fabulous Roc that carried Sinbad was the symbol of something unattainable? In the Bible, we are told that "a bird of the air shall carry the voice and that which hath wings shall hear the matter," and the Voice out of the Whirlwind challenges Job

> Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades,
> Or loose the bands of Orion?

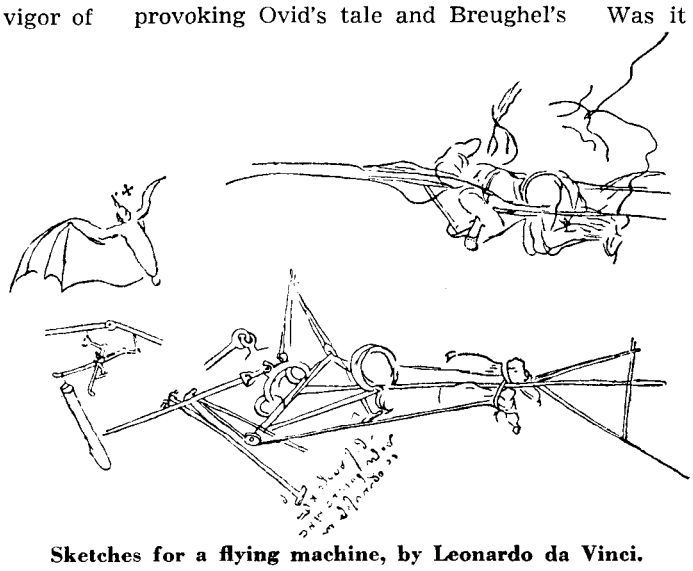
The legend of Icarus and Daedalus, provoking Ovid's tale and Breughel's great painting, achieved most lasting renown. But down through the Middle Ages we hear of Oliver, the Malmesbury Monk, Kaspar Mohr, the Flying Priest of Württemburg, and Father John Dampier who is said to have taken off from the walls of Sterling Castle on hens' feathers without fatal consequences. "Princes of the Air," Burton called them, "those aerial devils that corrupt the air and cause plagues, thunders and fires, above and beneath the moon."

In modern times, from the genuinely scientific experiments of Leonardo to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the legend assumes more credible shape, but hardly more so. Scientist, no less than poet and legend-maker, is thrown off the track by Montgolfiers's balloon. Rousseau's "New Daedalus," Poe's "Balloon-Hoax," and the phantasies of Jules Verne and the early H. G. Wells are creatures of the same delusion. Even Count Zeppelin believed that man would never be able to fly well on wings because the wing-tips, unlike the extremities of the bird's pinions, would be nerveless.

Cayley and Stringfellow knew better. Otto Lilienthal and Langley and the Wright brothers knew better. It happened.

What was it about the idea of flight that dazzled the imagination of man? Was it merely the prospect of a greater freedom? of an unattainable swiftness of transportation and communication? Perhaps that was all. Perhaps the desire for this ultimate liberation, this intimation of immortality, was all. But the psychologists think otherwise. And the evidence, conscious and unconscious, of the poets of flight corroborates them.

If psychology and psychoanalysis were exact sciences it might be easy to interpret the symbolism of aviation. Since they are not, and since, furthermore, they happen to be in their infancies, with no two schools subscribing to the



Sketches for a flying machine, by Leonardo da Vinci.

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same methods, we will accept their evidence as evidence and not as proof. The only extended discussion of the subject with which I am familiar occurs in Freud's monograph on Leonardo da Vinci. After tracing, plausibly enough, the connections between the great artist's recollection of a childhood erotic dream, his apparently celibate maturity, and his lifelong concern with flight, the psychologist asks why it is that people dream of flight, and concludes that the dream is a concealment of another wish—the wish for the ability of sexual accomplishment. He points to the linguistic connections between flight and sexual activity in many languages. He surmises that the child's unhappiness, springing from lack of knowledge and the desire to emulate the grown-up, seeks release in this form of violent fantasy. He theorizes further that Leonardo's special personal relation to the problem of flight indicates the one childhood problem which escaped repression and later estranged him altogether from sexuality. "It is quite possible that he was as little successful in his cherished art in the primary sexual sense as in his desires for mechanical matters; that both wishes were denied him."

It would be unfortunate to consider this conjecture of Freud's an "explanation" of flight. Equally suggestive, no doubt, would be interpretations from the biological, social, economic, or religious points of view. Its importance and interest attaches to showing, as one instance, how deeply rooted in man is the idea of flight. So let us check this theory against the evidence of the poets and airmen,—being careful not to make the mistake of generalizing that all pilots fly because they are "repressed" or that every story of the air must have a double meaning! Lawrence of Arabia, who spent the last years of his life in what he called the "monastery" of the Royal Flying Corps, and whose life seems to have been uniformally mysogomous, is the closest modern analogue of Leonardo. Both men were possessed of enormous physical and intellectual vitality. Both bitterly spurned the compromises of the world of men, and, unable to accept either the formulas or the mystical experiences of religion, sought salvation in the remoteness or untarnished comradeship of the air. "In speed," wrote Lawrence in his curious "Confession of Faith," "we hurl ourselves beyond the body. Our bodies cannot scale the heavens except in a fume of petrol. We enter it. We come."

"The airman's profession," writes Antoine de St. Exupèry, "is one of renunciation . . . he renounces the love of women. And by renunciation he discovers his hidden god." "It was beautiful to see him," wrote Hawthorne of Pegasus, "this solitary creature whose mate had never been created." Langewiesche bears witness time and again to those experiences which every sensitive person who has flown a plane has felt: the disembodied but strong attraction between pilot and instructor, the fraternity of airmen, mechanics, and fans at an airport, the affection of a man for his ship. "Every time an airplane landed or took off you watched it the way sailors watch a woman walking by the pier." "Crack-up stories are to these men what sex jokes are to ordinary men: a way to handle stuff that is too strong to be taken straight." But Langewiesche ascribes another reason, which may or may not be analogous, to the fascination which danger has for airmen: "A man likes to test his nerve and get closer and closer and still a little closer to the edge of life."

Sensitive women who have flown describe other but related experiences. Is Anne Lindbergh, for example, groping for a pre-natal peace and security when she relates her sensations in the radio-operator's cockpit during a trans-Atlantic flight? "There were, in the first place, the oval walls of the fuselage, curving up around me in a way that was curiously comforting and secure. They seemed to surround me in a friendlier, warmer fashion than the straight inanimate walls of a room." More consciously, Muriel Rukeyser in "Theory of Flight" looks for a symbol of love that will contain the fulfillments of both personal physical union and collective revolutionary revolt:

> Now we can look at our subtle
> jointures, study our hands,
> the tools are assembled, the maps
> unrolled, propellers spun,
> do we say *all is in readiness:?*
> *the times approach, here is the signal shock:?*
>
> Master in the plane shouts "Contact":
> master on the ground: "Contact!"
> he looks up: "Now?" whispering: "Now."
> "Yes," she says "Do."
> Say yes, people.
> Say yes.
> YES

The invention of the airplane by men with no interest in organized brutality or profits was completed just in time to assist at the explosion of these forces in the first World War. Technically, the art of flight advanced enormously as a result of the bloody competition. And from 1914 until today aviation has been intimately associated with war. Modern wars are not designed to kindle the inspiration of poets; the wonder is that they have produced any poetry at all. But they have, and perhaps they will continue

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In the Froude Tradition

CATHERINE OF ARAGON. By Garrett Mattingly. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1941. 477 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

MR. GARRETT MATTINGLY has written an admirable book in an admirable tradition. This life of the first wife of Henry VIII of England stems from a body of writings on Tudor history which goes back, in spite of his glaring religious and national prejudices, to Froude, and comes down through Pollard and Fisher to such American representatives of the tradition as Mr. R. B. Merriman and Mr. Conyers Read. It is regrettably true that in some circles, even among historians, the word "tradition" has overtones of dispraise. Such overtones are not here indicated. Though in the natural sciences the reality of cumulative knowledge of fact *and interpretation* is such that usually only the newest approach is the sound one, in the writing of history there is no such cumulation. Perhaps the incredible advances of engineering and technology have led us into false analogies. An airplane is faster than an automobile, and an automobile faster than a horse: therefore the horse is obsolete, and the automobile soon will be. Such reasoning is not altogether valid even in the field to which it is originally applied. Carried over as an analogy, it is quite false. You cannot fairly say that Marx, Freud, Pareto, and the "new" historians have made Froude, Macaulay, Fisher, and Merriman "obsolete."

This life of Catherine is written without benefit—and without harm—of Freud and Marx. It tells the story of a determined, sensible, and courageous lady cast by fate for a tragic part in one of the great dramas of high politics. It tells her story skillfully and simply, with the aid of rhetoric in the good, subdued sense. Mr. Mattingly has passed up possible aid from Lytton Strachey as well as from Freud. He shows no malice even toward characters he does not at all like, such as Anne Boleyn. If he makes Catherine a heroine, he does not make Wolsey a villain, certainly not a cheap or melodramatic villain. Henry himself, always a trial to biographer or historian, comes out in the round, a believable and, in some ways, especially in his youth, likable human being. But Mr. Mattingly is almost invariably successful with his characters, accessory as well as principal. In particular, the varied succession of Spanish ambassadors—Dr. De Puebla, Fuensalida, Caroz, Mendoza—is properly shaded and described, and escapes the usual deadening abstractions of diplomatic history.

The story and the setting are as well done as the characters, and the whole book moves. It moves because, for one thing, Mr. Mattingly has the talent to make it move, and because the school of historians to which he belongs has never forgotten that by no mere etymological accident "history" and "story" are related. But it does not move with glib over-confidence. Mr. Mattingly has lived for years in the sixteenth century, and though the *apparatus criticus* of his book is never obtruded, and need never disturb that mythical creature, the general reader, he makes no statements not based on thorough, painstaking research.

In the sense of a grand philosophical or sociological generalization, this book is not primarily a work of interpretation. But one could hardly, in these days, write about Catherine without considering why she was worth writing about, what "difference" her life made. Mr. Mattingly wisely does not come to grips with the old metaphysical teaser: do great individuals—kings, queens, prelates, statesmen—alter the course of history? The best historians have always left such insoluble problems to the philosophers. As a good historian, Mr. Mattingly sees that the divorce of Henry VIII played an important part in the establishment of the Church of England. Had Catherine acted differently—notably, had she put herself at the head of an English Catholic rebellion against her husband—he thinks that the history of that Church and of the whole English state, might have been very different. Catherine's quiet decency may well have spared England a St. Bartholomew's massacre. Surely only a very determined historical determinist would quarrel with Mr. Mattingly's temperate conclusion.

Adapted from the portrait by Michiel Sittoz
Catherine of Aragon

A Heroine of Banditry

BELLE STARR, THE BANDIT QUEEN. By Burton Rascoe. New York: Random House. 1941. 340 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT WHITEHAND

THE legends of Belle Starr are some of the most famous in southwestern bandit lore. Once, disguised as a man, she spent the night with a judge, revealed herself the next morning, then dashed out of town on her horse. Another time, to prevent her husband's killer from getting a reward, she looked up from the corpse and faced expectant officers with: "If you want a reward for Jim Reed's body, you will have to kill Jim Reed." At night her favorite mare can be heard pawing the ground near her grave. So the legends say.

But Burton Rascoe has examined myth, fact, folklore, and he reports in this volume that many brave tales of outlawry were born in the fertile imagination of *Police Gazette* writers who had never been west of Hoboken. The Jameses, Youngers, Daltons, Starrs, even Belle herself (née Myra Shirley), were not so daring or desperate as old-timers with a vague memory would have one believe. Nor were they outcasts, wronged by a malignant society, Robin Hoods who stole from the rich and gave to the poor. They were thieves, murderers, often cowards.

Belle met her first bandits in Texas through a love affair with Cole Younger. Later lovers and husbands included many notorious robbers and killers, yet throughout a lurid career she served only nine months in prison. For many years her cabin at "Younger's Bend" on the Canadian River was a refuge for outlaws on the scout. She was the intelligence behind them, and could "fix" pardons or paroles. Her son shot her in the back on February 3, 1889.

As historian Mr. Rascoe has rendered genuine service in exploding the crackpot mythology perpetuated by oldsters; but, as Rascoe well knows, Belle Starr without the legends is as drab as a Paul Bunyan without the tall stories.

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Hugh Walpole: 1884-1941

R. ELLIS ROBERTS

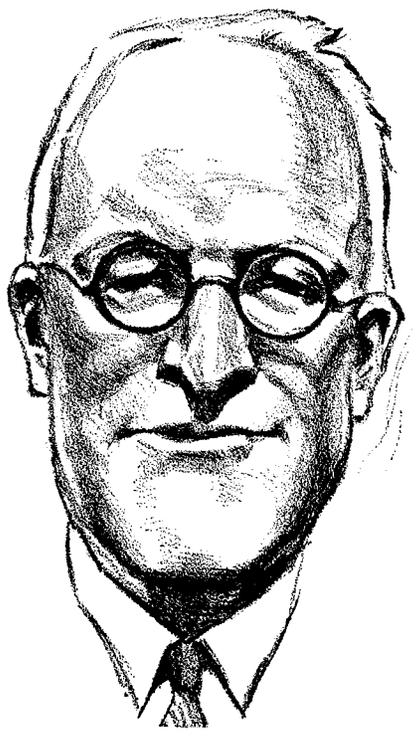
I FIRST met Hugh Walpole at the beginning of the century when he had just abandoned schoolmastering in a determination to make his name as a novelist. He was shy, eager, and obstinate. Charles Marriott, that subtle and neglected novelist, now for many years art critic of *The Times Newspaper* of London, asked me to help "young Walpole" to get journalistic work; and he soon became a leading reviewer for one of the chief London papers. He was never a good critic: he distrusted all his unfavorable reactions through a fear of offending people; and he had a great reverence for any established reputation, a reverence which stood him in good stead as he listened to the sage advice of Henry James.

His early novels were written as a disciple of Arthur Quiller-Couch; and have a neatness and concision which some of his later work sadly lacks. "The Wooden Horse" was unmistakably the story of a promising story-teller; and whatever criticism can be made of the later novels, there are few in which his story-telling gift is not evident. His own confession, "I write as I breathe," is an unconscious instance of brilliant criticism; for the only novelists who can afford to write unconsciously are those stupendous raconteurs, Dumas *père* is their master, whose invention and fancy never need any whipping.

Hugh Walpole's father was an Anglican priest who, during Hugh's boyhood, lived in New Zealand, New York, Cornwall, the City of London, and finally Edinburgh in Scotland where he was bishop. With all this experience of other countries, Hugh Walpole was the most English of contemporary novelists. I can remember no novel of his, except "The Dark Forest," in which the foreign scene plays an important part. Nevertheless, although any Londoner would find the London novels provincial, Hugh Walpole never rejoiced in his provinciality as did Arnold Bennett. He was at once less at ease and less self-confident than Bennett. This was partly due to idiosyncrasies in his temperament which made him expectant and fearful of rebuff, and, at times, almost neurasthenically distressed at unfavorable criticism, which he was too apt to fancy sprang from some personal dislike of the critic's.

Superficially he was a cheerful, bonhommous, cordial person; in reality he had in him a profoundly morbid strain, originating in a suspicion that he was not an altogether normal person. The artist who accepts any suspected oddness in his nature, Edgar Allan Poe, Edward FitzGerald, Herman Melville, Marcel Proust, may be unhappy; but does not suffer from spiritual disintegration, and may make out of his strangeness some rare beauty. It is unfortunate that Hugh Walpole never attained that acceptance, and his emotional unease was shown in a few books in which cruelty has an unpleasantly dominant part. They are among his best novels—the study of hate in "Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill," the study of sadism in "The Man with Red Hair," the study of frustration and abnormal emotional dominance in "The Old Ladies"—these cannot be forgotten by those who have read the books. They only fail of being masterpieces because the emotion in them is troubled by the personal excitement of the author.

Of his long epical, continuous series I cannot believe that posterity will trouble much with the Herries sagas. Their violence is too arranged, their colors too hot and crude. It is otherwise with the Cathedral series. Here you have books, written in frank and sedulous admiration of Trollope, which have vivacity, excellent craftsmanship, and enough of characterization to carry the story. In these, in the uncomfortable books I have named, and in some of the stories about Jeremy, Hugh Walpole's reputation is most secure.



Hugh Walpole

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

WHAT'S YOUR DRAMA I. Q.?

The following story, contributed by Ned Beatty Bartlow of New Orleans, contains the titles of fifty well-known plays, most of which have been popular hits. Whip out your pencil and underline them as you read along; then score one point for each title and one point if you can also name the author. A score of 60 is par, 70 is good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 18.

The women of our town have no time to sit under the green bay tree, even at the end of summer. When, once in a lifetime, they take a holiday, it is merely an excursion to the petrified forest for one Sunday afternoon, and even then they feel that it is on borrowed time.

It seems to be the American way to keep the ladies in retirement, for when the wife hears her master's voice she knows that though he may not be past the romantic age he is at the same time the man who came to dinner, and that he will not be ready to tell her to come out of the kitchen as long as their budget contains no margin for error if they wish to keep off the dead end. So she must continue tomorrow and tomorrow to have dinner at eight in order to prevent the breadwinner from trying to escape by way of a bill of divorcement on the grounds that he is the man who married a dumb wife.

While the little woman, knowing that the play's the thing, would rather be at the stage door on Broadway having a wonderful time, instead of an Alice sit-by-the-fire at home, she knows that she has no time for comedy. While she is well aware that hers is not the life of a lady, she at least consoles herself with the thought that she has had her brief moment of romance and young love as a coquette, and that after all we have only the world we make, and that life with father is not so bad as husbands go, even though he is not a golden boy.

Though, as a constant wife, she realizes the importance of being earnest and resolves to be true to the old loyalties and stop pining for the unattainable, she still cherishes the hope that some day, before she reaches her journey's end, she may, without being strictly dishonorable and playing the fool, have her shining hour, and she looks beyond the horizon into the green pastures where she will find her land of heart's desire.

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Roll Call of American Heroes

THE HERO IN AMERICA: A Chronicle of Hero-Worship. By Dixon Wecter. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1941. 530 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS

DIXON WECTER, thirty-six years old and Professor of English at the University of California at Los Angeles, has now established himself as a highly competent interpreter of American history and character. Born in Texas, educated in that state, at Yale, and as a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, returning again to our West to teach in Colorado and on the Pacific coast, he has gained a wide background not merely geographically but humanly. He understands America the better for having known other lands, and his present book, as well as his earlier one, "The Saga of American Society" published four years ago, are excellent examples of the newest school of historical writing which stresses synthesis and interpretation rather than the piling up of facts and which has emerged on the hither side of the debunking period into the realm of sane and balanced treatment of characters and events.

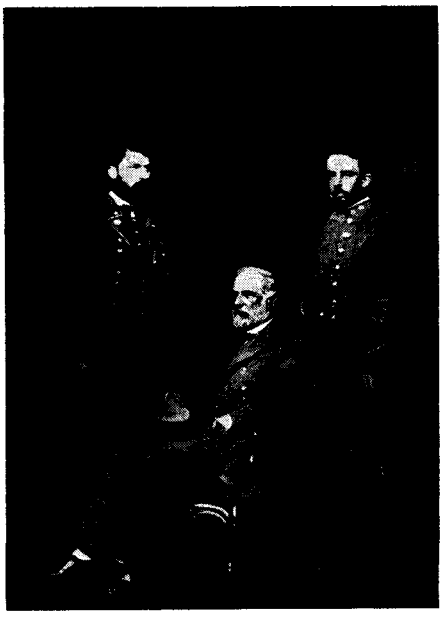
There is indeed an ample supply of facts, many of them not generally known except to specialists, and told with a relish and a light touch of humor, such as the mention of the discovery that the bank account of that model of thrift, Benjamin Franklin, was frequently over-drawn. If, however, Professor Wecter is far wiser than the members of the odoriferous school of the debunkers which throve a decade or so ago, his book is not a mere *olla-podrida* of amusing or instructive gossip. It is a serious and very suggestive analysis of the American mentality.

The "blurb" on the jacket speaks of it as, among other things, a pageant of great personalities, but it is much more than that would indicate. It is a long roll call of our heroes or near-heroes, and in some cases persons who might have been expected to be heroes but were not, linking the qualities possessed by them to those in the American mind and emotion which gave them their rank. The treatment may be likened to that employed by the Dutch painters of interiors in the eighteenth century. They did not sit in a room and paint it in broad impressions of light and form but as it, with all its detail, was reflected in a convex mirror. For Professor Wecter the mirror in which he views the American mind and character is the combined group of persons who have been accepted in the long run as heroes. It is a good test of psychological vision, and with his deft treatment becomes a most interesting one.

What *is* an American has long puzzled foreigners, and not a few of the descendants of our older established American families. How find a common denominator of, say, a prosperous descendant of the *Mayflower* in Boston and a Hungarian mine worker who has come as a recent immigrant and just taken out his "first papers?" Yet as we study the infinite variety of Americans, who are far from being as stereotyped as many would have us believe into "Babbitts," certain general ideals and qualities emerge. In the same way, people may suggest that we have no common ideal when we can elect in rapid succession as Presidents such men as McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson, and their successors. Yet Professor Wecter does find a common denominator for our heroes also.

He by no means confines himself to our Presidents or statesmen or even actual historical personages. There are a considerable number one would expect to find, such as Captain John Smith, Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Lee, Grant, the two Roosevelts, and what he calls "Gods from the Machine," such as Edison, Ford, and Lindbergh, but there are included likewise the legendary figures of folk lore, always the mirror to the soul of a people.

Many interesting side issues are raised and discussed, as for example, why New England has given us no individual heroes but only composite ones, such as the "Pilgrim Fathers" or the "Puritans," or why in a nation given to the worship of women we have no one great woman like Joan of Arc or a Queen Elizabeth. Many of the individual accounts are very timely and in their dispassionate analysis, as in such cases as Lindbergh and Franklin Roosevelt, have the effect of turning to a compass of reason in a storm of tossing emotion. The entire book, however, is timely, for in treating of the whole gallery of heroes, and in discussing why as of today some have risen and fallen, why others who might have been expected to have been placed in the Pantheon of the national interest and affection have failed of election, we find an answer to the question which is of dominant importance at the moment—what are the ideals of the average American. In a chapter on how Americans choose their heroes the author sums up his conclusions and tries to find the common denominator we have mentioned. In general he finds that the heroes who have survived were all of them those "who loved America more deeply than any selfish consideration. The hero as made in America is a man who has power and yet does not abuse it. He is the practical demonstration of romantic democracy." It would be unfair to quote the analysis further but the author believes that in the sifting process which has been now going on for some centuries, those who remain heroes today are characters worthy of the aspirations of a great people and nation. The book can be heartily recommended to all who wish entertaining reading and who wish to learn more of what the American is at bottom and best. In these days of confused opinion and of polls, no better touchstone for the real America could be found than a poll of its abiding heroes and of its purged and lasting admirations and affections as expressed in its hero worship.



—*From a Brady photograph.*
Lee after Appomatox

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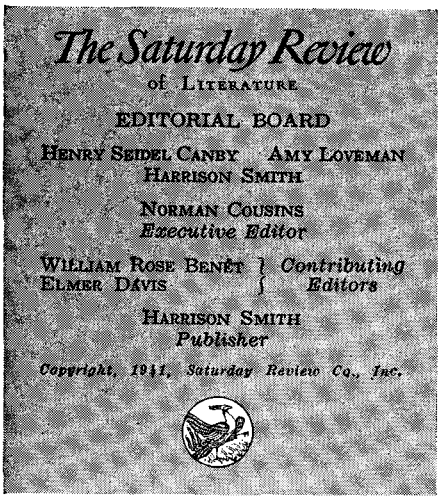

WRITERS' WAR CHOICE

As though writers could choose their wars! What the above title is meant to imply is that, in the event of war, writers in the United States at least (whatever their lack of choice in totalitarian countries) are confronted by certain alternatives. It will depend upon whether or not they are of the draft age, or, as we call it now, the age for selective service. But whatever age they may be, the question of how they can be most useful is going to worry them. If they are communists, of course, they have only to keep repeating that the war between the Nazis and England is an imperialistic war for world markets in which America has no business to concern itself, and that the only way in which America can conserve the future is to make an immediate alliance with Soviet Russia. This psittacism, as Bernard Shaw so cleverly calls parrot-talk, is very easy, and saves much wear and tear on the gray matter. It is also quite false. This is not an imperialistic war on the part of England, unless the struggle to preserve her very life be imperialistic; and many of us do not find in Soviet Russia's avowed purposes, general attitude, and deeds of the past, that heart-warming glow that draws us instinctively to her motherly breast. We have generous impulses, but also long memories. Russia has made peace with Mammon. Just how great a force for humanity and justice she is going to be in the world remains to be seen.

The writer's choice of what to do is not quite so simple. It is often extremely vexed. It will depend partly upon whether he is a man not only of the pen but also of action with certain aptitudes that may avail his government. In the majority of cases, writers are not as manysided as some of them used to be. William Butler Yeats was a statesman as well as a poet. Archibald MacLeish is Librarian-in-Chief of our country and is a writer polemic as well as poetic. But few of us could serve so well, even on the hustings. And the impatient writer may be tempted to rush into employments where he is no better, nor nearly as good, as the next man. Lovable zeal, but mistaken! It is our considered conclusion that he should really stick to his last.

And that "last?" All sorts of windy and emotional things are said about the worth and power of the written and printed word. But the fact remains that today as never before in the whole history of the human race it is necessary not only to preserve, but to increase, the honorable independence of true creative writing. It does not greatly matter whether spinners of romances for the "slicks" go into the Army or into the Red Cross, or if such necessary pursuits occupy their whole time. But it *does* matter that the most able and serious writers of the country address themselves to doing their most thoughtful work at this time. The best propaganda for democracy will reside in non-propaganda writing by its men and women of genius.

Europe because of the furious nationalism of one man and his adherents, presents the spectacle of a continent lost to literature and art, and rapidly discarding even the desire to regain the treasures it once possessed. Sparta has returned with a vengeance; Athens is crushed beneath her heel! We all know that our own continent has become the asylum for the honest thought and intellectual integrity that Nazi and Fascist Europe has contempuously tossed aside. One of our major responsibilities is to offer to exiled writers freedom of expression to the widest possible audience.

We have had to face facts with bitter realism, and we realize that against a malign foe who will stick at nothing, nothing will avail so much now as airplanes and armored equipment. But we also know that in the end, nothing will avail so much for the world as dedicated art and the power of the intellect.

If the American writer has "one charge to keep," this is it, so soon as the die is cast and every effort bent toward war. And a yet greater responsibility rests upon him; which is to delineate and define that Democracy for which we fight; to define the limits of "free enterprise" and the techniques and controls that must—or we go under!—assure us *actual* Liberty; to delineate line by line the humane and universal doctrine that is going to serve us for *the future*, not only as it was and as it served us in *the past!* It is up to the poets, for instance, to stop niggling with their precious obscurities, and to give us some real light and leading! It is not true at present that the average man can draw any sustenance from the poets. He regards the art, in nine cases out of ten, as a cryptogram for which he has no time. And what incredible follies are we fed in the mass of magazine fiction, what nauseous imbecilities, what Cinderella-stories and Big-White-Collar-Boy bosh!

Never before has the world so needed sane, clear, honest thought. The tidal wave of perserve "ideologies" has wellnigh overwhelmed us. The Lie, and the End-That-Justifies-The-Means were never so rampant or so shameless in writing. Reason and Logic abdicate when the Party Line slams down its hammer. Loyalty merely closes its eyes, holds on to its nose, and takes a leap right off the dock into the wild, wild waves! So did the Farly Christians? Yes. But they had a God.

It is up to the writers to show us very clearly what God we have today, and why we should *not* serve both God and Mammon! It is up to them to keep clearly before us the highest aspirations of the human spirit, and to damn the merely expedient! It is up to them to lead their country, to keep it from profound pitfalls, both on the right and on the left! They abdicate their office when they address their talents to any lesser duties.

W. R. B.

Western Night

Joseph Joel Keith

THE joshua trees salute the arrogant moon,
and coyotes split the cool night air with their cries,
and a scorpion waits for the love-death that comes very soon,
while over the lowland an evil tranquillity lies.

Here is a country where man has not flowered his way;
here is a haunt where the bandits of bad lands rule,
each killing each but each leaving others that slay;
here is the savage heart's food, his evil blood's fuel;
here is the thing that is strangely lovely and cruel.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The I. Q. Revelation

SIR:—
Huzzah huzzah for Franklin Young
and the Opposition Party!
Huzzah for Howard Collins and the
quizzi-literati!
Huzzah for Canby, Loveman, Smith,
and for happy Mr. Cousins—
This is the stuff your readers like! The
letters come in dozens.

Down with the present, up the past!
(It makes us feel much brighter.)
Who cares what writer's wrong or
right? The Reader's always righter.
Why give him things which aggra-
vate his mental impetigo
When all he wants is a quiz to soothe
his solitary ego?

Come, give Collins half your space,
and save the other pages
For the eager correspondents whom
he flatters or enrages.
Forget this dull contemporary noblesse
obligato!
Give us your A, and we'll dance all
day to Nerotic pizzicato!

Oh hip for the boys who know by heart
the works of Donne and Milton,
And hurray for the fragile followers
of Mrs. Roquefort Stilton.
But Callay! Callooh! for the silent
few, and the Staff of the *SRL,*
Who can let the quiz fall where it
may—who quiz, but never tell.

ROBERT W. PATTERSON.
Bar Harbor, Maine.

Leave It Hard

SIR:—Don't change the *SRL* I. Q. quiz. Of course, it is too hard to score perfectly every time—in fact, I haven't done it yet. But I like quizzes from which I can garner a little information instead of those which inflate my ego. Let's leave them alone and let Mr. Franklin Young (May 3) read other magazines with quizzes he can't fail to rate "perfect" in.

NINA FESSLER.
Kansas City, Mo.

Fact Behind Fiction

SIR:—There has been some discussion as to whether or not an actual crime was the basis of Joseph Shearing's "The Crime of Laura Sarelle" as is usually the case with that author's novels. I am glad to be able to clear up the matter with the following information:

In 1780, a Captain Donellan, an Irishman, poisoned Sir Theodosius Boughton (Sir Theodosius Sarelle of the novel) with an essence of laurel water. (Donellan is the Captain Avershaw of the book). There was an inquest as the result of which Donellan was hanged in Warwick in 1781. Leppard Hall of the novel, represents the actual Lawford Hall in Warwickshire.

"No misprints and a perfectly adequate index. What can I say?"

George Morley's "Leafy Warwickshire" and Bridgeman Boughton-Leigh's "Memorials of a Warwickshire Family" (both in the New York Public Library) deal with the case.

I have also found out the crime behind "Blanche Fury." In 1848, one James Rush murdered Isaac Jermy-Preston, and the latter's son, in order to gain possession of their property. Rush was hanged at Norwich, just as Strangeways of the novel.

MAX LEKUS.
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Correction Corrected

SIR:—Mr. Anthony Boucher [*SRL,* May 31] believes that Mr. Franklin Young should be delighted to find a *minor error in Mr. Howard Collins's* quiz answers in your issue of May 3 and apparently believes, too, that the title of the story upon which the play "Rain" was based was "Miss Sadie Thompson."

If Mr. Boucher will pardon me for pointing let me call his attention to the fact that the great Maugham yarn was called "Miss Thompson." The name "Sadie" did not appear in the title. The tale itself was first published in the old *Smart Set* when under the direction of Mencken and Nathan it was introducing us to some of the best short fiction this country has ever seen.

Thus amiably nipping Mr. Boucher for his error in his correction of Mr. Collins's error, let this friendly flea pursue Mr. Collins and bite him for implying that Mr. Maugham "created" Pago Pago by building it from his own imagination—as Gilbert created Barataria, which is non-existent. Diligent reading of the Book of Genesis fails to bring to light any evidence that Mr. Maugham had anything to do with the separation of the earth from the seas and the consequent appearance of islands. No; Pago Pago was created some little time before the coming of Miss Thompson and the Davidsons who stepped out of real life into the more tangible characters of Maugham's vital story.

HARRY P. TABER.
Wilmington, Delaware.

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Mode of Living

THE SHAKER ADVENTURE. By Marguerite Fellows Melcher. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1941. 319 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by EDWARD DEMING ANDREWS

THIS book is an account of what was, in many respects, the most important of all the religious communities or communistic societies which have arisen in America during the past two hundred years. Nearly all these experiments in a better mode of living ended in early failure. A few, notably the monastics at Ephrata, the Inspirationists at Amana, the Harmonists at Economy, the Separatists at Zoar, the colonists at Bethel and Aurora, and the followers of John Humphrey Noyes at Wallingford and Oneida, existed long enough to provide tests of principle and evolve authentic cultures. The rest, even such famous establishments as Robert Owen's New Harmony and the Fourier-inspired Brook Farm, were short-lived, serving only to emphasize the difficulty of translating exalted doctrines into effective social practice. The Shakers, however, were exceptions, even among the more successful communities, by virtue of their early demonstration that a practical industrial economy could be built on a foundation of religious conviction. Though now approaching extinction, this theocratic order, whose example inspired many comparable movements, has maintained its austere, reticent way of life for over a hundred and fifty years.

With sympathetic objectivity Mrs. Melcher has told the story of the rise of the ecclesia in England; its organization, after severe persecution, in New York and New England; its extension westward; its growth in prosperity and influence for good; its general character, as manifested in its tenets, leadership, craftsmanship, industry, and religious art; the conflicts, internal and external, which affected its destiny; its relations with the "world"; its slow decline; and, completing the cycle, the condition of the order today. The narrative is always interesting, the facts and figures reliable. Even in the author's speculations on the meaning of the adventure, in terms of its legacy to the future, insight and understanding are in evidence. A selective bibliography provides a convenient key to the main printed sources.

While the treatment of the theme is in the main praiseworthy, it falls short of being the definitive history for which there is an ultimate need. Little is added, for instance, to what has already been written on the life, visions, and doctrines of Mother Ann Lee, the Manchester prophetess and founder of the Shaker church, a penetrating analysis of whose strange mysticism is essential to an understanding of the origins of the movement. The author's material on the rise of the communal idea, the organization of the church, and the early struggle for survival and recognition, is also deficient in detail. Thus, while we have able characterizations of such figures as Richard McNemar, the western leader, and Frederick Evans, the eastern spokesman of the order, personalities of even greater influence are slighted: especially Father Joseph Meacham, the organizing genius who wrought Ann's gospel into a workable socio-economic program, and Mother Lucy Wright, her successor "in the female line," who served as supreme head of the United Society for twenty-five years after Meacham's death—the period of its greatest development. An extensive manuscript literature, scores of fugitive printed items, and much illustrative material, are at the service of the scholar. A liberal use of such sources would have contributed color and documentary compactness to the record, and added to our understanding of one of the most interesting social experiments in American history.

Deathless Romance

ENGLAND IS MY VILLAGE. By John Llewelyn Rhys. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1941. 198 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

JOHN LLEWELYN RHYS was a young pilot in the RAF. For a few years before his death last August, he was writing stories and sketches into which he put what he felt about planes and skies and airmen. Some of them are collected here under this most apt of titles. As a testament the book is moving, using this word quite literally, and it possesses also an oddly blind and dream-like strain of poetry. If Rhys was not the Rupert Brooke of his generation—for Brooke was a writer, while Rhys was an airman who was learning to write—he responded at any rate to the same compulsion: to set down the spiritual life of those who fought gladly for their Village.

John Llewelyn Rhys

Just how successfully he has done this it is not easy to say. There is nothing in this book even approximating realism. If Rhys, as self-portrayed here, is representative of his generation, then they are indeed a generation of mystics, ever lovers but never haters, fearfully conscious of self but yet oblivious, to the point of blindness and dream, of all that extends from self outward. The mood throughout is one of solitary exaltation. There seem to be enemy planes, crashes, even death, but all of this is vague and unreal, cushioned by a hundred layers of dream from actual impact upon the man. It is as though Rhys did not believe in death. The fabulous end of the first story, as well as the atmosphere of deathless romance everywhere, attests this. The last story is called, in a brave attempt at immediacy, "You've Got to be Dumb to be Happy,"—yet the book is keenly happy. Nothing is clearer than that Rhys thought flying in the war was the happiest experience a man could have. Was he dumb? He was dumb to what some of us on the ground take to be the truth: to the ugliness of bombs and mass murder and crashing machines and the actualities of dying.

Viewed large, we miss the whole truth here, if the whole truth is what we want. In a more limited sense there are excellences in the book that ought not to be overlooked. Particularly there is the fresh presentation of the air-life, directly from the machine out, as it were. The feel of the plane, the speaking of name-parts lovingly as though they were poetry (Whitman thought so), the rising into air, the existence above the earth, —these are the poetry of this book and, in the long run, its best and truest part.

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Regional Close-up

DESERT COUNTRY. By Edwin Corle. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1941. 357 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by PAUL B. SEARS

"TO those who love the desert country it is at once cathedral and laboratory." Thus perfectly does Mr. Corle sum up what he has to say.

This book is one of a series on American folkways. The end-paper maps show the desert country in a diffuse spotlight. This spotlight centers upon Nevada and comes to its hazy boundaries in the five surrounding states. The editor of the series appears to understand that the Architect of the Desert Country had less respect for straight lines than was shown by the government officials who solemnly chopped it up into states.

The desert is not lifeless. Neither is it uninhabitable for man. In 1940 Nevada finally achieved the coveted distinction of having one human being per square mile.

In any region with a human population the ecology of the environment comes to its good or evil flowering in the folkways. Thus, however unconventional according to the canons of formal science, any good presentation of the folkways of a region merits serious attention. This goes even for a contribution that happens to be entertaining, strange as that may seem.

Mr. Corle evidently knows the background of his subject in terms of natural phenomena and moral history. Clearly he has gone about and seen the desert at first hand. There is nothing superficial about his account —not even the whopping lies which he so meticulously reports. Incidentally the story of the Oyster Man of Bicycle Lake—a hostile eccentric whose story had to be got the hard way—is not a bad study in technique.

We find ourselves introduced to the desert at the beginning of the book, via the Mohave, where Mac's Cactus Club is having its Grand Saturday Nite Opening. We finish the book in a mystical, but far from goofy, reverie on space-time. It is no trick for the desert to carry us from Honky-Tonk to Einstein.

Pioneers, Indians, Mormons, desert country newspapers, legendry, and the story of Death Valley—such in order is the structural framework of the book.

Of the pioneers and prospectors, Jack Mitchell, after a cave experience as horrible as that in Poe's "The Pit and the Pendulum," gives us a glimpse when he says "I shall go back."

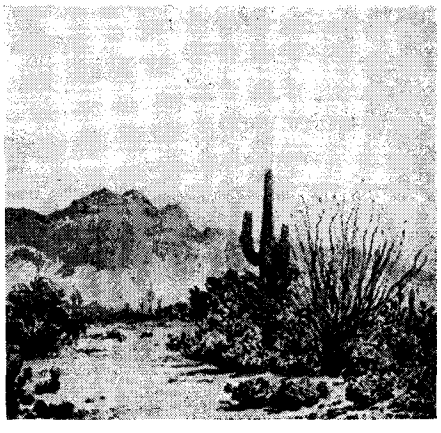
The Indian problem is summed up in a short paragraph:

> What lies ahead for the Hopi cannot be foretold. Probably his will be one of the last aboriginal cultures to withstand the onslaught of the white world. It may even survive. But it is doubtful. Just how long can the adult Hopi people of 1941 induce their children to believe in the Katchina gods and the personification of masked deities when these same children go to school and learn English and want a Ford car and laugh at Jack Benny?

Perhaps the section on Mormonism, "Strange Virgin," while full of interesting and fairly judged material, is least satisfactory. After all, hallucination, massacre, and polygamy make lively reading but they distract us from the important thing—Brigham Young was an empire builder with a more fundamentally constructive genius than Cecil Rhodes.

The chapter, "Fourth Estate," is a honey from start to finish. How could it be otherwise when the desert has spawned such newspapers as the *Tombstone Epitaph* and the *Coachella Valley Submarine?* The cleaning up of Panamint, by using the law of gravity when all other laws failed, is something to remember. Silver bullion was cast into cannon balls too heavy for any freebooter to manage. Thus did editorial enterprise accomplish what the Wells-Fargo organization refused to touch.

There are two kinds of desert. There is the desert produced by arid and forbidding climate. There is also the desert produced when man wrecks a landscape as he has at Duck Town, Tennessee, or in the Dust Bowl. The natural desert is living, sparsely, it is true, but beautifully organized and efficient. Man-made desert is truly desolate and sterile. We are likely to have trouble working our tricks wholesale on the real desert, if I read what Mr. Corle has to say in this interesting book correctly.



—From Contemporary American Prints, 1931.
Superstition Mountains, Arizona, by A. L. Groll.

Cape to Cairo

MUMBO JUMBO, ESQ. By James Saxon Childers. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. 1941. 421 *pp., with index.* $5.

Reviewed by HASSOLDT DAVIS

IN his subtitle Mr. Childers states that this is "a book about the two Africas," assuming that his audience is unaware that "Africa today is almost incredibly different from the barbaric land of yesterday"; thus the two Africas, the land of deserts and jungles we see in the films, of cannibals and great beasts, and the prospersous land of mines and cities which are as modern as our own. But I rather doubt that any reader who is adult enough to spend his own five dollars for a travel book is also naive enough to think Tarzan's kingdom the height of civilization on that great and varied continent.

Be that as it may, Mr. Childers has written a refreshing tale of travel. There is nothing new in it, no scenes, adventures, or philosophies that have not been recorded before, but the book makes excellent reading because of the character of the author and his ability to write tersely and well. Traveling from the Cape to Cairo he was always generous in his appraisal of what he saw, tolerant of annoyances such as the natural filth of the natives, always the man of good will with sincere respect for the natives' small achievements.

In South Africa he saw the danger to Britain in the increasing agitation of the Nationalist Party for complete self-government; the ghosts of the Boer War are not yet laid. Traveling north by plane and train he visited the great gold and diamond fields and came to the fabulous ruins of Zimbabwe which may have furnished King Solomon with his "gold and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks." The lure of the "safari" called him then, but recognizing the business big game hunting had become, with lions conveniently placed for him to kill, he was content merely to photograph them.

Gradually he worked north to the Congo where the pygmies were distinctive to him only for their size, stench, and beggary. Then down the Nile he went to Egypt and across North Africa.

The major fault of the book is the author's assumption of the reader's ignorance. The charm of the work lies mostly in the author's casual asides, his relish of the taste of fresh water, his "Bang! went another illusion!" his delight in a town named Bububu. And his photographs are excellent.

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Books Are Beating the Bombs

LONDON BOOK TALK

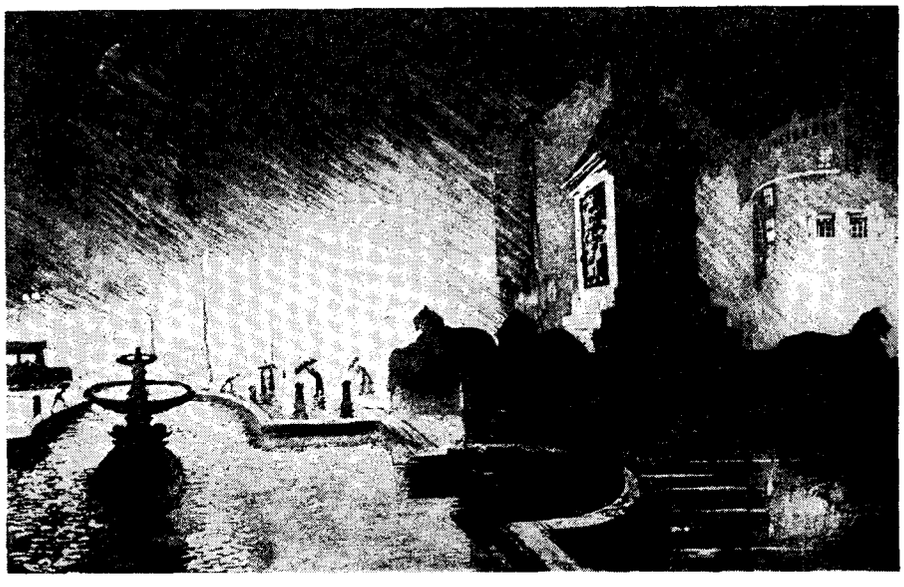
JOHN HADFIELD

ON the night of December 29, 1940, when the Luftwaffe concentrated their venom on the ancient beauty and cultural nerve centre of London, six million books, including, ironically, the publisher's stock of "Mein Kampf," went up in flames. Suddenly, and too late, the man in the street realized the irreplaceable value of those Wren churches and priceless antiquities which he had always taken for granted. Suddenly, but not too late, he was also reminded of the incalculable part played by books in his national life.

How are books and the book trade standing up to the blitz? Perhaps the answer to that question can be found in the fact that although nearly half the publishing houses of Britain were burnt out in that single night, within two weeks every one of them was established and carrying on business elsewhere. And although Simpkin Marshall, the largest wholesale book business in the world, was wiped out, it is today operating again in a new and revolutionary form, as a gigantic central clearing house for books, owned and managed coöperatively by the publishers and booksellers. So far from accepting defeat the book trade has taken advantage of the calamity to make a great step forward in trade organization that might well have occupied twenty years of patient negotiation in peace time.

Altogether some ten million books have been destroyed by enemy action since the blitz began. Before the great fire of Paternoster Row the Luftwaffe had succeeded with devilish skill in locating and bombing several of the largest bookbinders' warehouses where large stocks of books were held. Unlike Wren churches, books can be reprinted more quickly even than Hitler can destroy them. The centuries-old publishing house of Longmans, for example, has reprinted one and a half million books since the New Year. The only lasting damage which bombs have done to the world of books is the destruction of the publisher's remaining stocks—usually not more than two or three hundred—of a number of specialist and technical books for which there is not enough popular demand to justify a reprint. The copies of such books scattered through bookshops and libraries throughout the country have therefore greatly increased in value (though the charter of British publishing, the Net Book Agreement, will automatically prevent any profiteering in them).

The publishing trade of Great Britain is only a small unit of commerce, consisting of 6653 men and women, employed by 300 firms, of whom only about forty operate on a large scale. It might be supposed that in time of total war this fragment of commercial life would be obliterated. This has not happened. Our Government, having a professional author at its head, has recognized the economic, political, and cultural value of the book trade, to the extent of exempting books from the general Purchase Tax, and alloting publishers a more advantageous ration of paper than some other trades are allowed. There are grave difficulties facing book publishers, especially the continual drain on skilled personnel and production staff, as men are called up into the fighting services. But the publishers are undaunted, and they point with some pride to the fact that although so many of their overseas markets are now inaccessible—Scandinavia, Holland, Poland, and Czecho-Slovakia were big buyers of English books—nevertheless book exports have not declined; indeed they have increased. Our friends in the United States are very largely responsible for this, and we are deeply grateful to them. The basic cause, however, is the reaching out of free peoples everywhere for the only free literature that now comes out of Europe.



—From "This Realm, This England" (Hastings House).

Trafalgar Square, by Rachel Carnegie.

Meanwhile, what of books on the home front? Restriction of paper supplies, and a self-enforced concentration of publishing activities, have inevitably reduced the number of new books published. Last year there was a drop of more than thirty per cent in comparison with the figures for 1939. Yet last year's output was nearly double that of 1917. At Christmas there was so great a demand for books that most of the best-sellers were temporarily sold out. It is surely significant, too, that last year the Joint Advisory Committee of publishers and booksellers received no less than 134 applications for official recognition from newly established booksellers.

A graph showing the sales of W. H. Smith & Son's chain of bookstores all over Britain proves that the "blitz" has actually stimulated book sales, and at present their sales are fifteen per cent more than for the corresponding period last year.

Yes, books are in great demand. Which books? This is a difficult question to answer, for the circulation of books in this free country does not readily yield to analysis and exact calculation. The most obvious feature is the immense demand for cheap books by the fighting services. It might be assumed from this that there has been a great demand for sensational literature of a type to appeal to "the brutal and licentious soldiery." Apart from the displacement of many pulp magazines by some gaudily dressed (or undressed) shilling shockers there has been little evidence of that decline in values which war is supposed to entail. It must be remembered that the British fighting man of today is the civilian of yesterday. He is reading technical textbooks, essays, books on the countryside, poetry, and the classics, indeed all kinds of books. The popularity of the classics, especially the big substantial novels and

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the poetry anthologies, has been extraordinary. The sale of Everyman's Library in January and February of this year shows an increase of just over fifty per cent compared with the same period of last year.

"How Green Was My Valley," "The Voyage," and C. S. Forester's novels have been selling in big numbers, but there has been a sharp decline in fiction output generally, and it is probably true to say that the better has driven out the worse. There has been no decline in the popularity of American novels. "Chad Hanna" and "All This and Heaven Too" have been big successes. Dan Wickenden's "Walk Like a Mortal" has been highly praised, and Alice Duer Miller's verse-novel, "The White Cliffs," has been immensely popular. "For Whom the Bell Tolls," a Book Society selection here, is the only novel Mr. Churchill has read since he took office.

Outstanding biographies such as General Wavell's "Allenby" and John Buchan's "Memory Hold the Door" (issued in America under the title, "Pilgrim's Way"), are selling as well as ever. So are the first-rate books of travel such as Robert Gibbings's "Sweet Thames Run Softly." Again the second-rate book has been eliminated by the war, and the first-rate book gets a wider circulation in consequence.

It is this persistence of the inquiring democratic spirit, regardless of bombs and reverses, that will ultimately defeat the Nazis. Books are in the front line of this war. They are in the citadel, too. It is now clear, even to the unlettered private soldier or able-bodied seaman, that we are not fighting for imperialism or for trade; we are not merely defending our homes against a foreign assault; we are resisting a way of life that would black out our dearest privilege, the right to think, speak, and publish our opinions freely. That is something that means more to us than homes, wealth, or health. Since Milton published "Areopagitica" the freedom of the printed word has been the essence and the symbol of that right.

It is too early yet to say whether the war is producing any great literature. So many authors are in the fighting or civil defense services that we are not at present getting half our normal literary output. The war has not yet produced (in print) any great poetry or great novel. It has, however, produced some brilliantly effective literary reporting, such as "The Road to Bordeaux." And it has revived the almost forgotten art of pamphleteering. There has been a continual stream of pamphlets on the progress of the struggle.

Eire in Iowa

HOLDING UP THE HILLS. By Leo Richard Ward. New York: Sheed & Ward. 1941. 202 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

THIS series of sketches about the Catholic Irish in Iowa has unquestionable verisimilitude even where it is wrong, and a great deal of charm in its characterizations and pictures. There are more Catholics in Iowa than members of any other denomination—about one-fourth of the church members profess Catholicism—but not all of these are Irish, and a good many of the Irish are merely labelled, like the Methodists and Presbyterians.

Yet this is a good *genre* treatment of Hibernians on Hawkeye earth, maintaining old customs and phrases, dealing more skillfully with souls than soils, in the long-established Irish manner.

There is no continuity to the book except in the general sense that through many facets it comes to a focus on the kind of life that is led by Eire in Iowa. The farm pictures are excellent though in the discussion of apples the Winesap is briefly dismissed—it is the best apple ever invented—the mealy Jonathan is praised, and the delicious Grimes Golden is not even mentioned. In the matter of hog butchering, on whose economic aspects Mr. Ward is very sound, we never eviscerated an animal till it had been scraped with draw-knives or tools made for the purpose, and "flenched" over the carcass for its gross fat, useful for soap and lubrication. I have never heard of anyone in my part of the country eating any part of a pig's interior, though I have heard that hearts and livers sometimes go into sausage. We used to turn such matters over to the victim's sisters and his cousins and his aunts, who approved of the system.

Mr. Ward's thesis that the men hold up the hills is well and lyrically done. What holds up the men? The hills, of course.

The Sheltered Life

SEPTEMBER TO SEPTEMBER. By Jacobine Menzies-Wilson. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1941. 301 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by PHYLLIS BENTLEY

IT is very difficult for me to be fair to this book. To begin with, the life it depicts, the mild sheltered life of the pre-war English country gentlewoman, made up as the writer says of "les petites choses," was the kind of life which excited in many women of my generation a bitter contempt, a passionate determination to escape it. We fought with all our might for the right *not* to be limited to a life of doing the flowers, selling bric-à-brac at garden fêtes, and attending afternoon meetings where properly proposed resolutions were considered ungenteel. We fought, and we had our casualties; so that a placid acceptance of such a life seems to many women of my generation a kind of betrayal. Again, Mrs. Menzies-Wilson, though in her gentle way sincerely sorry for the Jews, was, without any real grasp of the European situation in 1938, an ardent appeaser. So was not I; accordingly my fur was very definitely on end as I followed her mild ramble through the fateful months from September 1938 to September 1939.

Still, this quiet little record has its merits. The English landscapes are charmingly painted, and the life presented, though dull because so empty of intellectual activity—no book, no play, no piece of music is mentioned—has the fragrance conferred by complete integrity and a very honorable devotion to the duties of a wife and mother as Mrs. Menzies-Wilson perceives them. When this wholesome daylight life is compared with the hysterical convulsions which pass for life in totalitarian states, it shows fair indeed. The writer is not without an occasional vision, sometimes humorous, sometimes sad, of the limitations of her mode of being; moreover, when she is faced with the ordeal of war, she transcends these limitations with a wholly admirable courage. She mothers her six Cockney evacuees warmly, realizes that nothing will ever be the same again for people of her kind, and accepts the prospect of that change with her usual calm. I do not myself feel that her book has sufficient significance to justify its publication in this country; but, as I say, it is difficult for me to give it fair judgment.

Phyllis Bentley, whose series of Yorkshire novels has been appearing over a period of years, has just returned to England from a lecture tour in this country. She has been active there in defense work.

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POETRY OF FLIGHT

(*Continued from page 4*)

to, and the inspired pilots have been responsible for more than their share.

Of course the ambiguities of flight were foreseen long before the chancelleries of Europe vied with each other to reach the Wright brothers ahead of the U. S. War Department. But when the first air war actually started, airmen were much too busy learning to manoeuver their flimsy cloth-and-wire craft to think in any such pseudo-poetic terms. It was as well. When they did come to write of their experiences years later they had the grounded leisure to recollect terror in tranquillity and to describe what they did in a language appropriate to a new technique.

If the first World War did not produce a poet-pilot, it did produce a number of airmen capable of translating their experiences into most eloquent prose. Gabriele d'Annunzio had a genius for putting histrionic Byronism into his aerial exploits, but his poetry was behind him when the war started, and combat flying seems only to have increased the megalomania of his already unbalanced mind. It was different with the young men who flew. If there did not chance to be among them a d'Annunzio, much less an Owen or a Lawrence, nevertheless their reactions to the experience were worthy of the medium, and definitely those of a new century and a new technique. The novels of Faulkner and Kessell, the stories of Richard Euringer and James Warner Bellah, the reports of Cecil Lewis, are tough but essentially civilized. The strain of cynicism running through them reflects the mixed motives of the warrior of 1914-18, the strain and desperation of untrained men in untested ships taking off for almost certain death. "O God—if there is a God—save my soul—if I have a soul." The pilots talked in this vein, drank heavily, and wondered whether the infantry knew what it meant "to be alone in the stabbing cold, with no one to talk to, no one to help you, nothing between you and the ground but a thin trembling fabric of cloth and wire and twenty thousand feet of emptiness"—but for all that, the love of his free, new craft and the bond between himself and his fellow craftsmen set him apart from others.

These feelings, at their best, extended far beyond the boundaries of race and nation, to include friend and foe in what St. Exupèry was to call "the world of men." "Aviation united them," wrote Malraux, the poet-pilot of the Spanish Civil War, "as childbirth makes all women one." It led some airmen to foresee the plane, in the hands of an international police force, as the instrument which would eventually destroy its perverters and insure universal peace. Cecil Lewis, one of the few pilots to survive the devastating mortality of five years of combat-flying in the first World War (incredibly, he is reported to be now in active service in the present war!) observed and reported the chivalric code common only to the flying services.

> When they captured our pilots or observers they treated them with courtesy and gallantry, as I think we did them. I do not remember, except on one occasion over London in 1917, ever having any feelings of animosity against the Germans. They were simply "the enemy"; their machines had black crosses, and it was our job to bring them down.

Is it any different in the present war? During 1939 and early 1940 the press was full of stories of the unusual code of honor adhered to by both sides; then, when the bombing of cities began and the censorship tightened up, they stopped. "In battle," the author of "Squadrons Up!" reports:

> the airmen of today are hardhearted and practical. They have too many things to think of and too little time to think in, to spare precious seconds on sentiment. If a pilot's guns jammed or his ammunition ran out in *this* war, his adversary never waved to him and called "O.K., pal, streak home and get fixed up." . . . War in the air had become a cold-blooded, lightning thing.

Having never heard or read of a pilot in the first World War carrying chivalry to the point of calling out "streak home and get fixed up," can one help wondering whether the *author* is the one who is showing "sentiment," and whether "precious seconds" and "hardheartedness" are really at such a premium in 1941?

The moral basis of the poetry of flight is in the airman's awareness of a pure medium, of a new instrument without terrestrial limitations, of a perspective of the earth seen whole. It is also, as we have said, in the comradeship of a calling to which is entrusted a large responsibility for good or evil. André Gide was not being sentimental when, after reading St. Exupèry's "Night Flight" in 1931, he predicted that through aviation an oasis of heroism and personal integrity would survive the horrors of the wars of the future.

Who has flown and not felt the paradox of man's power: the perfect, self-righting balance of this delicate machine, the pitiful mark left by human hands on the vast panorama stretching below? Who has flown and not gloried in the illusions of power created by gunning the ship on the runway, clearing a section of steel fence for the first time by ten feet, slipping wingwise with ailerons and rudders reversed into the uprushing earth? Who has flown and not felt closer to nature for learning to look for the wind's least messengers? for understanding the reasons for diminishing thrust as one climbs into the atmosphere's rarity? seeing the wonder of the sun go down as the tight blanket of darkness draws in from the compasses quarters, making the very air small and the hangars' cylindrical black mouths fade away as the roads become rivers of light?

Who has flown and not been struck by the annihilation of ugliness at even a few hundred feet? No remnant of planless poverty or obsolescence survives a short climb. Over a great city characteristic five-story roofs provide in uniform black the fine geometry of a gridiron. The wonder that light works on this formidable terrain depends on whether one is flying into or away from the sun. Flying into it, the impression is hard. Uniformity takes on an iron hue relieved only by such brilliancies as would resemble gongs or artillery fire if they could be heard. Of such are the rivers, whose collision with the setting sun is head on; the small bodies of water, and the myriad tiny scintillations of pane-glass and windshield. But flying with the sun at one's back reverses the process, favor-

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ing everything with shadowed softness. Only a supreme act of intellect on such occasions can evoke the shapes of dumbbell tenements, mournful yards, irresponsible penthouses. "A glaze is put over life. The leaping hare is caught in a marble panel."

Lilienthal, before his glider crashed in 1896, thought that soaring *practised as a sport* might be "one of the most effective remedies for the conquest of those diseases of the machine which are incident to our modern culture." "We were flying," wrote Wolfgang Langewiesche more than forty years later, "for no better reason than that we needed flying for our souls; which probably shows that our souls were functioning none too well." "The machine, says St. Exupèry, "which at first flush seems a means of isolating man from the great problems of nature, actually plunges him more deeply into them." The testimony of an ace in the first World War is the same: "The prosaic and wordly things —money, position, self-interest—out of which men build their little sand-castles of vanity, mean nothing."

Is it possible that through contact with the air poetry itself may experience a tremendous revival, a return from the parlor of the nineteenth century and the ivory tower of the twentieth, to its great tradition on the stage of life? It is possible. Better for poetry, and possibly even for the poet, to fall short of perfection in essaying an ambitious theme than to refine a cameo. An objective supra-personal poetry can only be written by poets with roots in the material and way of life they are celebrating. Poets who have succeeded in speaking for their time have been more than poets. Aeschylus was a soldier. Dante and Milton were statesmen. Shakespeare was an actor and stage-manager. Goethe, among many professions, was a biologist. Donne wrote his greatest poetry after he became Dean of St. Paul's. It was not until Alexander Pope that poetry became a profession; with the romantics and symbolists a hundred years later it was on the way to becoming a vice. Rimbaud, who gave up a promising career as a poet for East African trade and gun-smuggling in 1875, was the first to rebel against this ingrown preciosity. But he was too unbalanced by the tension of his conflict to go on writing.

There is none of this conflict between action and contemplation in sculpture. A good architect must know every inch of the ground before he retires to his drafting board. Painting is hard work. Even composing demands mastery—physical mastery—of one or more instruments. Is there any conceivable reason why writing, which takes in more territory than any of the other arts, should be confined to pushing a pen? Would Thomas Wolfe, if he had had other outlet for his vast energy, have filled shelves of ledgers with such a furious, formless outpouring?

But there are other reasons why the poet should be a specialist in something besides his poetry. A Virgil, a Dante, even a Goethe, could understand the work of his world as a whole. Today the world is too complex. The attempt to understand it as it were from the top down can only lead to confusion, to further "dissociation" in the mind of the artist. The poet must understand some part of his world well. He must be of his world in order to speak compellingly either for it or to it.

It is not suggested here that flight is the bridge to the regeneration of poetry in our time. It is merely to hazzard the opinion, based on the various factors already considered, that it may be *a* bridge. There is no reason why a new poetry, having its point of entry in the functional, should not be approached in many other fields.

But over and beyond the possible regeneration of poetry through flight or the effects of flight on poetry, we come to the figure of the airman himself as a symbol in the world of today. Who is this airman? He is a familiar of science—depending on science's most delicate calculations, confirming or rejecting its hypotheses—but no scientist. He is forever shifting and weighing the most stupendous landscapes and seascapes and skyscapes with his eye, rehearsing and balancing the most intangible forces in his hand —but is no artist. He is certainly not a legislator: lawyers are notorious at hangars: try to impress upon a "logical" mind that speed and height are the surest safety! He is the world's freest man, and yet its most dependent—depending for his very life, as even a seaman does not, on obedience to codes, care for minutest details, reaction to stimuli. Though he cannot function at all without the most formidable network of machine-shops, searchlights, pipe-lines, control-towers, directional beams, and world-wide weather reports—he lives on the very margin of civilization; alone, above all this organization; in the sky.

When Lauro de Bosis, back in 1930, felt the supreme necessity of making a symbolic protest against the growing tyranny and inhumanity in the world, he instinctively selected the airplane as his instrument. He was a poet, sensationally popular with men and women, no neurotic. He did not know how to fly, he had had no money to buy a plane. He learned to fly. Somehow he raised the money for a plane, and when that failed him, for another. Many volunteered to accompany him over Rome. He refused to risk any life but his own. He went by himself. He went unarmed. He did not carry a sword but a message of hope. He did not call for vengeance on the oppressors or sacrifice on the part of the oppressed. Liberation, he knew, must come from within; and sacrifice he did not ask, but gave.

Our age has heard much of material interest, and of the salvation of society through envy and organized reprisal. But so far these movements from the bottom up have only succeeded in imposing a greater tyranny, a more frozen and barbarous organization, on the sufferers. An élite based upon hunger and worshipping power has brought only more hunger and heavier chains. Is it impossible that the élite of the future, if civilization has a future and if a true élite is to be born, will exercise their influence *from the top down?*—not by force, not through money, but by admiration of example: the willingness to sacrifice, the acceptance of responsibility, the authority of disinterested love? Is it possible that within the figure of the airman lies

> "some secret, tremendous meaning not-yet plumbed?"

The foregoing article will constitute the Introduction to Mr. Selden's anthology, "The Poetry of Flight," to be published by Duell, Sloan & Pearce.

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Doctor's Eden

A YANKEE DOCTOR IN PARADISE. By S. M. Lambert. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1941. 393 *pp. and index.* $3.

Reviewed by MABEL S. ULRICH

SINCE Eve's disastrous flirtation with the first serpent every earthly paradise has had its snake in the grass. In Dr. Lambert's Eden its name was legion but he stayed twenty years and emerged only when he had vanquished the leader of them all—hookworm. For thousands of years that miserable thread of evil had flourished practically unchecked in the South Pacific until malaria alone could claim to be its rival. In 1918 a third of the world's inhabitants were infested by this worm. That year Dr. Victor Heiser, then the Rockefeller Foundation's Eastern director, ordered Dr. Lambert to Papua on a two days' notice. By 1938 the number of cases had been so reduced that the disease was not even mentioned in the Foundation's report. This has been one of the most dramatic accomplishments in medical history, and the only reason it has occasioned comparatively little comment must be because the Papuans and the Fijians, despite the rapid shrinking of our world, still seem too far away to matter very much. But they mattered tremendously to Dr. Lambert. He sees himself as "just an item in the Rockefeller Foundation's globe-circling humanitarianism," but fortunately for us his book proves him "an item" worthy of the mantle of his admired chief, as a story-teller no less than health-officer. He has given us a story as chockablock with high adventure, humor, color, fantastic people, and solid information as is the "American Doctor's Odyssey" itself.

Part of Dr. Lambert's job was in the nature of a health survey of the islands. His territory included over 90,000 square miles. It necessitated travel by every conceivable type of transportation. He treked through jungles that finished his hobnail soles in one day, by trails never before traveled by a white man, spent days in dugouts manned by natives, on shaky little coast steamers fighting tropical hurricanes, even several on a rich man's yacht. Physical hardships and narrow escapes he regarded as merely incidental to his program, to be mentioned only when they belong in the story. But the beauty of the islands and the innate decency of the native islanders never became commonplaces to him. Race superiority for Dr. Lambert has no meaning at all. He has that genius for people—black, brown, plum-colored, yellow, and white—that springs from a genuine liking of the human race and a driving curiosity concerning its behavior. His interest in the native religions, folk-lore, group customs, superstitions, was as lively as that in their diseases, and tales of the remoteness and ferocity of a tribe merely whetted his appetite. He learned Pidgin English and explains its grammar and unsuspected complexities. He used ballyhoo methods to attract audiences to his lectures and demonstrations, capitalized on his reputation as a government-backed witch-doctor, and by turn awed and scandalized the British doctors by his unconventional attack. All of this, told in undecorated, forthright English, makes exciting reading.

Dr. Lambert is now living in California with his wife (she must certainly have a story of her own to tell) and his daughter born in Suva. No one can deny him his right to relax at ease. But there is a nostalgic tone to the last paragraphs of his book that makes this reviewer hopeful that he may yet seek out another paradise and another million patients and that he will tell us about them in another story.

Mabel S. Ulrich, a graduate of Johns Hopkins Medical School, was active in public health work during the World War.

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Ringside Seat

A LONDON DIARY. By Quentin Reynolds. New York: Random House. 1941. 304 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by HENRY B. KRANZ

AMONG the two dozen American newspapermen who covered the blitz in London Quentin Reynolds was the "story chaser," a kind of O. Henry, seeking human interest material in a war-stricken city. He writes with wit and an immense sense of humor in the brisk style which has been enjoyed by the readers of *Collier's* and his first book, "The Wounded Don't Cry."

During October and November, 1940, he kept a diary which represents an uncensored and unedited account of the life of a newspaperman in besieged London. He apparently derived more pleasure out of his stay in London than most people might have expected. His job, "the best job in the world," was perhaps to cover the lighter aspects of existence under the blitzkrieg. He was excellently fitted for that task. "We have our bad moments, that is true, but we have a lot of fun, too. I know I've never had so much fun in my life."

Mr. Reynolds writes also: "People are actually living in London. They're dying, too, but they're getting twenty-four hours a day of living first." Mr. Reynolds went to parties, had luxurious dinners at the Savoy and Scott's, drank with the boys late at night at Landsdowne House, and accompanied the King on a visit to Southampton. But he also shows a keen interest in the more serious aspects of life in London. He reminds us that "people are sleeping in damp shelters, eating cold food and in general suffering like hell," and also that after a visit to one of the tube shelters he spent half an hour in a hot bath, where he tried to "get the taste of the subway air out of his skin."

In a postscript, written on April first, Mr. Reynolds, just returning to London after a short stay in New York, finds that "things don't seem real in New York any more. People, even my best friends, live in a dream world." Occasionally in some of Mr. Reynolds's stories he gives the impression that some people in London are living in a kind of dream world, too.

"A London Diary" is a strange cocktail of fun and tragedy, and the mixture is heartening. The world, after all, will some day be bright again. Londoners will forget the terrible times they went through and—let us hope, very soon—be able to have fun without bombs.

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Fascist States and Industry

BIG BUSINESS, EFFICIENCY AND FASCISM. By Kemper Simpson. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1941. 203 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GUENTER REIMANN

MR. SIMPSON used in this book the research studies and the report he recently prepared for the Temporary National Economic Committee, entitled, "Relative Efficiency of Large, Medium Sized, and Small Businesses." As former economic adviser of the Securities and Exchange Commission, the author can claim extensive experience in research on corporations.

A weakness of his book is that it simplifies the problems of Fascism and democracy too much. Mr. Simpson identifies democracy with free competition, and believes that unless trusts or monopolist corporations are curbed authoritarian rule must be the result. His contention, that economic competition will gradually lose ground and a "fascist controlled" government will be installed if big corporations are allowed to extend their sphere of influence, is not quite new.

Mr. Simpson's main theme is, however, not fascism but the competition between large and medium sized enterprises. In defense of a competitive economy, or liberal capitalism, he points out that most large-scale enterprises have not succeeded in producing goods cheaper than many small-scale and most medium sized enterprises. Yet large-scale enterprises have succeeded in wiping out small-scale competition, and in curbing the rise of new competitors, because of the monopolist power of big corporations. Otherwise, from the mere economic point of view, large-scale enterprises or trusts often, and according to Mr. Simpson, even in most cases, are less profitable than medium sized businesses.

The greater part of his book tries to prove this thesis. Mr. Simpson stresses a point which seems to be convincing to the reviewer: it is not true that the largest enterprise with the greatest mass production unit is producing relatively cheaper than the rest of the industries. The absolute power of a trust that controls the distribution system, raw material resources, or which has superior financial strength, may eliminate competitors who are technically superior or are able to produce relatively cheaper. Concentration of production in a few large-scale enterprises may be overdeveloped in a society where monopolist price control or mere financial superiority can absorb or suppress competition. This raises a problem of wider issue. New technical progress may coincide with simultaneous encouragement of large-scale and small-scale production.

Mr. Simpson is convinced that monopolies or large-scale enterprises are in conflict with the democratic principles of a competitive economy. But he does not indicate that should be done to remedy what he regards as a mere maladjustment. Does he want new anti-trust measures of the government or other State interference in support of the principle of free competition? The paradox lies in the fact that such measures violate the principle Mr. Simpson wants to maintain.

German Aberration

EUROPE AND THE GERMAN QUESTION. By F. W. Foerster. New York: Sheed & Ward. 474 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by H. R. WREATH

FOR forty years Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster brought both fame and notoriety upon himself as a professor of philosophy at such universities as Munich, Vienna, and Zuerich. Born of an old Prussian Lutheran family he felt himself to be a prophet born to cry in the wilderness, an Old Testament prophet cursing his people out of love for them, while he was still a young man. It was as far back as 1895 that he put forward the opinions expressed in this book. Wilhelm II promptly rewarded his patriotism by sending him to prison.

In it he sums up his life work in an impressive and powerful analysis of the spiritual tragedy which befell Germany and with it, the whole of Europe. He tops it with an arraignment such as no German has ever written before. "The Prussian spirit was responsible for the first World War, which was in its turn the direct outcome of Bismarck's exclusion of the South Eastern Germans, a logical product of German aberration which had continued for centuries, namely the resolve to pursue an extremely national policy in a domain whose history had been supernatural." And "the Slavic countries were only waging a defensive war against Prussian aggrandizement policy."

He goes even further in his accusations of guilt. He details the German barbarisms committed during the World War, blames the German generals for its outcome, and terms the Versailles Treaty a "peace of reparations, not of revenge." Hitler is born of Bismarck's spirit, the new Germany is "a collective beast of prey that brazenly proclaims itself and has cut itself off from human society." This leaves only one course open: Germany must pay.

Foerster outlines the entire course of German history from the conquest of pagan Prussia by the Teutonic knights to Hitler's latest depredations and goes thoroughly into recent political developments in Europe.

This is a tragic book on the whole, because it proves that for a long time to come Germany will be like a patient bleeding upon the operating table with no one to say when a doctor will appear to sew up the gaping wounds.

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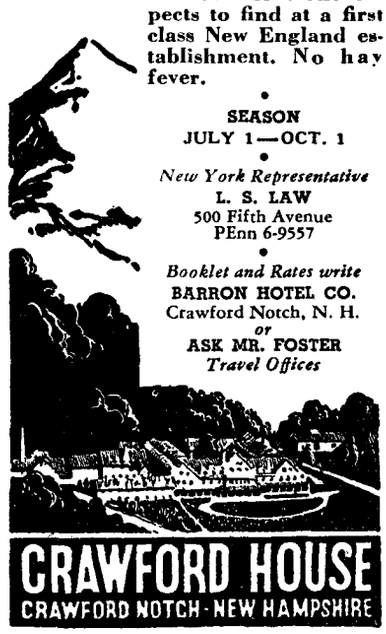

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Art in Mexico

MODERN MEXICAN PAINTERS. By MacKinley Helm. New York: Harper & Bros. 1941. 205 *pp. with index.* $5.

Reviewed by OLIVER LARKIN

MacKINLEY HELM, before he wrote about Mexican art, collected it. His collector's taste is broad and sensitive, and he has lunched, wined, and talked with some forty of the painters appraised in this book, which ranges well beyond a recapitulation of the work of Rivera, Orozco, and Siqueiros. The "big three" have overshadowed a host of gifted men, but it is no longer a mark of erudition, as Mr. Helm points out, for an American writer to look at Mexican art without detecting the hand of Rivera. Before Obregon's New Deal, scores of artists and writers prepared the Renaissance, foresaw its objectives, formed its values, experimented with techniques for its realization. These precursors, like the fabulous Dr. Atl, are here given their due place. About one half of this book deals with painters other than the big three, many of whom have never touched a wall, and several of whom work in abstract or surrealist vein.

Since Anita Brenner wrote "Idols behind Altars," a full-length treatment of modern art in Mexico has been twice attempted, in this volume and in Professor Schmeckebier's survey of two years ago. The scholar and the connoisseur have complemented each other: Schmeckebier described and interpreted the paintings themselves, chiefly murals, emphasizing the collective character of much that was accomplished, and the artistic and social rewards of group effort; Helm considers most Mexican artists solitary, uncompanioned beings with slight relish for collaboration; he therefore describes less the works themselves than the personalities who made them, less the "social content" than the individual style. The scholar more successfully appraises exterior forces which have moulded a whole movement; the connoisseur more freshly evokes qualities of individual experience, perception, and formal expression within a movement, and usefully reveals the astonishing range and fertility of easel painting, drawing, and print-making done independently of movements and schools. His reports of conversations with artists constitute less to our critical understanding than to the general vividness and readability of his book, and prevent his chapters on the new men from becoming a parade of names,—Galván, Cantu, Tebo, Tamayo, Lazo, Meza, Dosamantes. Without condescension and without hero worship, and with the help of nearly a hundred wisely chosen illustrations, Mr. Helm has dipped into what would seem to be an inexhaustible well of talents. His reader will define "Mexicanism" as something that goes far deeper than the tourist stereotypes of "sombreros, straw mats, and cute babies."

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. The Women, by Clare Boothe. 2. Our Town, by Thornton Wilder. 3. The Green Bay Tree, by Mordaunt Shairp. 4. The End of Summer, by S. N. Behrman. 5. Once in a Lifetime, by Kaufman & Hart. 6. Holiday, by Philip Barry. 7. Excursion, by Victor Wolfson. 8. Petrified Forest, by Robert Sherwood. 9. One Sunday Afternoon, by James Hagan. 10. On Borrowed Time, by Paul Osborne.

11. The American Way, by Kaufman & Hart. 12. Ladies in Retirement, by Reginald Denham & Edward Percy. 13. Her Master's Voice, by Clare Kummer. 14. The Romantic Age, by A. A. Milne. 15. The Man Who Came to Dinner, by Kaufman & Hart. 16. Come Out of the Kitchen, by Alice Duer Miller. 17. Margin for Error, by Clare Boothe. 18. Dead End, by Sidney Kingsley. 19. Tomorrow and Tomorrow, by Philip Barry. 20. Dinner At Eight, by George Kaufman & Edna Ferber. 21. The Breadwinner, by Somerset Maugham. 22. Escape, by John Galsworthy. 23. A Bill of Divorcement, by Clemence Dane. 24. The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife, by Anatole France.

25. The Play's the Thing, by Ferenc Molnar & P. G. Wodehouse. 26. Stage Door, by Kaufman & Ferber. 27. Broadway, by Philip Dunning and George Abbott. 28. Having a Wonderful Time, by Arthur Kober. 29. Alice Sit-By-The-Fire, by James M. Barrie. 30. No Time for Comedy, by S. N. Behrman.

31. The Life of a Lady, by Richard Aldington & Derek Patmore. 32. Brief Moment, by S. N. Behrman. 33. Romance, by Edward Sheldon. 34. Young Love, by Samson Raphaelson. 35. Coquette, by George Abbott & Ann Bridgers. 36. The World We Make, by Sidney Kingsley. 37. Life with Father, by Howard Lindsay & Russell Crouse. 38. As Husbands Go, by Rachel Crothers. 39. Golden Boy, by Clifford Odets.

40. The Constant Wife, by Somerset Maugham. 41. The Importance of Being Earnest, by Oscar Wilde. 42. Loyalties, by John Galsworthy. 43 The Unattainable, by Somerset Maugham. 44. Journey's End, by R. C. Sherriff. 45. Strictly Dishonorable, by Preston Sturges. 46. The Fool, by Channing Pollock. 47. Shining Hour, by Keith Winter. 48. Beyond the Horizon, by Eugene O'Neill. 49. The Green Pastures, by Marc Connelly & Roark Bradford. 50. The Land of Heart's Desire, by William Butler Yeats.

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THE NEW BOOKS

Biography

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS. By H. P. Willcocks. Norton. 1941. 430 *pp., with index.* $3.75.

The chief merit of this new biography is that it devotes ample attention to the last nineteen years of Mary's life. This period of her imprisonment is neither so romantic nor so dramatic as her earlier career, but it is historically of real importance. As a personality in the affairs of Elizabethan state, Mary did not lose stature with her flight from Scotland. So long as she was alive, Spanish and French diplomacy took cognizance of her position. She was the focus for conspiracies among the English Catholics. This book demonstrates, with real insight and considerable authority, how well she knew her power and how boldly and astutely she played her part. Cecil and Elizabeth were too strong for her, but her charm, her determination, her faith, and her ability made her a formidable antagonist. She was, in the light of the evidence here adduced, neither the Mary Stuart so celebrated in romance nor the notorious scarlet traitoress of the Protestant satirists; she was an essentially womanly woman who with dignity and fortitude fought a losing battle against overwhelming odds.

C. D. A.

Fiction

SATAN'S SERGEANTS. By Josephine Herbst. Scribners. 1941. 330 *pp.* $2.50.

Josephine Herbst writes of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, of farmers and small town people, and of the city people who buy the old stone houses. Delving deep into the hearts and minds of her characters she seeks to discover not a particular locality, but an underlying stratum that is common to humanity. She keeps close to the lives of her characters, whose problems are universal; their weakness, their irresoluteness, their evasion of reality, are the very faults that have undermined our world. The setting makes itself felt;—without description one is aware of the stuffy village store, the meagre houses of the natives, the hills with pheasants in the underbrush, the restored stone farmhouses, with waxed pine woodwork and new bathrooms. The people would not charm or arrest us if we came face to face with them; they are the people we pass unseeingly every day in the year. Miss Herbst discloses their essential interest.

The novel is not the story of one person, but of a group; one misses the focus that a central character might give. It is an episode that welds the varied and unequal lives into one whole: the catastrophe of the forest fire. It is then, in a moment that has something of the cruel reality of war, that character is tested, and lives are changed. Miss Herbst sees life in its bitterness and goodness, and one must accept the deep honesty of her values.

C. C.

MR. FRANK MERRIWELL. By Gilbert Patten (Burt L. Standish). Alliance. 1941. 305 *pp.* $2.

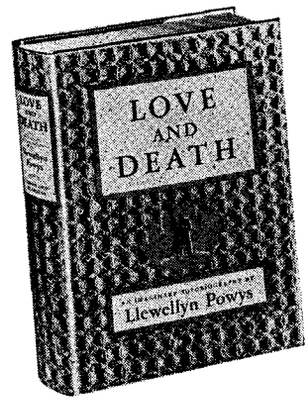
If you are cherishing hallowed memories of young Frank Merriwell you need have no fears about this book. It's the same Frank exactly. Of course he's married now, to Inza, whom he addresses in moments of intense affection as Girl. He has two grown children, a business, a home in the suburbs—Mr. Babbitt, in fact, with no bad habits and in the pink of condition. He still treads easily upon the balls of his feet, and he can still lick any five evil men. Things are more serious now than when he was a lad. Instead of tracking down the scoundrel who stole the examination paper, or clearing his name of the unjust accusation that he threw the game with Millbank, he must today grapple with social problems. Old Harry Willwin, the financier of the town, is a hard-fisted and vindictive old skinflint who squeezes his help. On the other hand, the factory strike is engineered by a group of vile communist aliens, led by a coarsely beautiful woman known as the Red Flame. Merriwell saves the day; just how is not exactly clear since everybody seems to be wrong. But no matter about that. It is a pleasure to see him at work again, applying his old, clean, boyish slant to these troubled times.

N. L. R.

UNFINISHED TAPESTRY. By Dascomb Atwood. Liveright. 1941. 312 *pp.* $2.50.

Mildly thoughtful in tone, this book does not cut deep enough into experience to be significant. Like its heroine, Mrs. Preble, it is a little faded in coloring. Unfortunately for its interest, the kind of life it deals with, its travels of the day before yesterday, seem at this moment remote and unimportant.

It is the story of the Prebles, a family transplanted from a conservative Boston atmosphere into the rootless life of strangers in New York. The character of Mrs. Preble is well-drawn. A woman of forty-seven, she is the bridge between the cut and dried philosophy of her old husband, and the too-fluid modernity of her children. The novel is an attempt to depict an authentic phase of American life, but it is not sharply observed enough to be successful. With the exception of Mrs. Preble the characters have no vitality. Old Mr. Preble, whose foibles are justly put down, is a bore, but a feeble bore; the young people are



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THIS novel, largely autobiographical, is the last book written by Llewellyn Powys before his death. It has been greeted as a literary masterpiece and a great love story. Some of the first reviews follow:

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"As a hymn of natural awareness, free-roving beauty, delight without greed, it strikes into the English past, can join with the vast and capaciously satisfying variety of English literature."—NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW

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never real, for the author seems unable to penetrate the brittle outer shell of their "modernity." Character, after all, cannot be revealed by the color of a lipstick.

There are curious lapses of taste, which stand out glaringly against the quiet-colored background, and the author has made crude use of touches of superstition which cast no forebodings over the reader's mind, but merely add to the book's effect of slightly amateurish craftsmanship. C. C.

OUT AT THE SOLDIER'S HOME. By Elizabeth Corbett. Appleton-Century. 1941. 266 *pp.* $2.50.

When Elizabeth Corbett was young enough to be called "Bebby" she lived in a Wisconsin soldiers' home. Her father was one of its administrators, and the home was in fact the Corbett home for her first twenty-five years. All of her childhood memories center about it, and she has made a book of these. It is a record understandably colored by tenderness and nostalgia. If Miss Corbett is seen to labor over her individual portraits of old soldiers remembered, so that they emerge as cantankerous, quirky, funny, friendly, often caricaturish, old men, it is plainly a labor of love. The romantic tradition of soldiery, that has withered away in this day of regimented armies, here lives as brashly as it ever did. Even in their "home" these crusty old fellows exhibit still a rugged individualism, a temper and temperament, which belonged once to armies of volunteers. If war did anything else to them, Miss Corbett does not remember it. She does remember them as a group of veterans endlessly spirited, like old centaurs, guardians of an unusual and happy childhood.

N. L. R.

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Fiction

THE TRUNK. By Elizabeth Coatsworth. Macmillan. 1941. 228 *pp.* $2.50.

Elizabeth Coatsworth sets her heroine, Una Hancock, two tasks. First she has to adjust her own "civilized," conventional nature to the temperamental, moody gusts of a painter-husband. Secondly, she has to adapt herself to life in exotic, tropical San Juan. Una finds all of San Juan upsetting. The heat exhausts her, and she feels that both climate and native are unfriendly to her. Just as her husband's nature and emotions respond favorably to the tropics, her feeling is one of repulsion. There is something sinister about the very air of San Juan which succeeds in terrifying her. She cannot bring herself to feel at home there. Though she settles into a routine of life, she never unpacks her trunk, always hoping to leave. Finally matters reach a stormy crisis on both sides. How Una accepts her husband's art on a new basis, and with it, life in San Juan, is Miss Coatsworth's story. It is enough to say that the trunk does get unpacked in the last chapter.

Though Una is somewhat of a prig, her problem is a real one. The tropical background is well suggested. The author evidently knows Central America as well as New England, the more usual background for her stories.

R. C. B.

HANG MY WREATH. By Ward Weaver. Funk. 1941. 358 *pp.* $2.75.

Here is another Civil War novel to add to an already crowded field—this one a novel of action. "Hang My Wreath" is as full of activity as an old-time movie script. One of the busiest heroes in fiction in some time is Captain Hubert Cary of the first Rhode Island Cavalry. Twice he escapes capture in a most miraculous way . . . once straight from under the hangman's noose. He attracts dangerous situations as a magnet does nails, but he always manages to leap on a horse found conveniently nearby, or to disguise himself successfully in a Confederate uniform and dash away. In between reconnoitering in the valley of Virginia, meeting his Confederate Cary cousins, and seeing the battle of Antietam take shape, he is pursuing a beautiful English lady, Lenore Duveen, toasted as "that queen of hearts, worshiped throughout Virginia and Maryland, the Golden Diana!" At first, Lenore will have none of him, but after he has pursued her in his impetuous way and rescued her twice from a fate worse than death, she realizes he is her man.

Ward Weaver is supposed to be a pseudonym for a writer well known in another field. Whoever he may be, he concentrates on plot and likes a mixture of adventure, sentimentality, and plenty of action. R. C. B.

Miscellaneous

HAUNTED ENGLAND. By Christina Hole. Scribners. 1941. 184 *pp.* $3.75.

This is a collection of genuine ghost-stories—stories, that is, that are at least believed to be true. The hauntings are here grouped according to the character of the manifestations: poltergeists, of course, those best attested and least explicable of psychic phenomena; ghosts who bear the marks of violence, and those tranquil spirits who appear merely to be unable to leave the scenes where they were happy; apparently causeless apparitions, and purposeful spooks who come to denounce their murderers or to show a mortal, all too mortal, concern with the disposition of their property, like the one who figures in John Wesley's Journal. There is a chapter on "Ghosts of the Great," which tell of the shades of some of the wives of Henry VIII, among others, and of William of Orange, Cromwell, and the earthbound regicides; but the author points out that though there were innumerable supernatural warnings of his fate, there are few if any ghost stories connected with Charles I. The son of Saint Edward ascended to heaven.

There is little principle of selection to be found here; the author tells us in her preface that some of these tales are ancient and some modern, some well attested and some mere legends. Her attitude varies according to her material, being skeptical or respectful as the stories seem to deserve; but she gives little indication of her attitude to the supernatural in general. She mentions the theory that apparitions may be merely a kind of echo or photograph of violent emotions caught upon the atmosphere and reproduced for the sensitive long after the actual actors have gone about their business in hell or heaven; but she does not pronounce upon this idea. As a collection of stories, the book is readable, though this reviewer holds the heretical view that true ghost stories are much inferior to the best inventions; think, if Edgar Allan Poe or Montague Rhodes James were earthbound, how much more original they would be in their hauntings than the actual ghosts, most of whom can think of nothing to do but walk or drive around without their heads. A few of the ghosts here, however, show more originality; and the amateurs of such matters will find here the sources for the hauntings in Marion Crawford's "The Screaming Skull" and in Charles Reade's "Put Yourself in His Place." B. D.

CORNER DRUGGIST. By Robert B. Nixon, Jr. Prentice-Hall. 1941. 291 *pp.* $2.50.

A really thorough and competent treatment of this subject could prob-

(*Continued on page* 22)

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Books in Brief

MARIAN ANDERSON. *A portrait, Kosti Vehanen. Whittlesey House,* $2.50. The author of this sympathetic account of Marian Anderson's life as an artist and her development as one of the great singers of our day, stayed with her as her accompanist during her triumphant ten years in Europe and for a short time in America. The book begins with his discovery of Miss Anderson singing like an angel before a small audience in Berlin and ends appropriately with her facing the thousands who came to hear her before the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. The bitter fact that race prejudice kept her from American audiences for so long is lightly passed over.

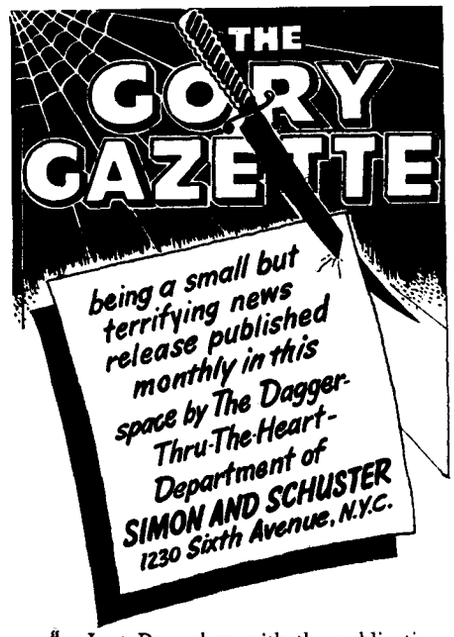
GENERALS AND GENERALSHIP. *General Sir Archibald Wavell. The Macmillan Co.* 50c. This little booklet, with a foreword by General Sir John Dill, contains three lectures delivered at Trinity College and Cambridge, two years ago. They explain the qualities that a general must possess within himself, the abilities he must have to handle his troops, and his relationship with the statesmen who run the government and so command his activities. Appearing at a time when the author stands at the threshold of a campaign that may save or break the British army, it can be read as a foreword to history. General Wavell reveals himself as an understanding and a clear-minded man you feel that he might win victories against any odds.

BRITAIN AT WAR. *Edited by Monroe Wheeler. Museum of Modern Art.* $1.25. With an introductory poem by T. S. Eliot, and text by Herbert Read, E. J. Carter, and Carlos Dyer, this volume of British war art, photographs, and cartoons, is evidence that the British government intends to keep alive and to use what Monroe Wheeler calls, "the civilizing arts." Many of these 107 plates have already been reproduced in our rotogravures and some of them are taken from the British War Museum where they have been hung since the last war, signed by men long since famous, Augustus John, Sir William Orpen, Eric Kennington, Paul Nash. The new names, Moore, McGrath, Mansbridge, Ardizzoni, Armstrong, etc., will doubtless be as well known by the time the next war comes along. Here you see giant tanks lumbering through an English village, the terrible drama of Dunkerque, the ruins of cities, grim figures sleeping in shelters, ships at sea, the whole dreadful and yet heroic panorama of modern war, under, on and above the earth and the sea around this beleaguered island.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
SIX WERE TO DIE *Kirk Wales* (Mystery House: $2.)	Warning notes from vengeful pardner scare sextet of English stock-moguls who call in medico-sleuth and die miserably.	Lethal gas, poisoned pills, good old curare, and assorted booby-traps provide much horrific action handled quite amateurishly.	Abysmal
DEATH IS LATE TO LUNCH *Theodora DuBois* (Houghton Mifflin: $2.)	Plunge from room kills one guest at New England "convalescent inn." Poison on roof slays another. Dr. McNeill officiates.	Elucidation of second killing especially interesting. Solution comes bit suddent-like, but suspense keeps up 'til final startling disclosure.	Good
CURIOSITY KILLED A CAT *Anne Rowe* (Morrow: $2)	Deserted bride searching missing hubby in forbidding Maine mansion finds fresh corpse. Local detective turns in expert sleuthing job.	Engagingly written, happily characterized, and sufficiently shivery family fracas type of yarn, with diverting mineralogical arabesques.	Good
THE DEADLY TRUTH *Helen McCloy* (Morrow: $2.)	Truth-inducing drug, administered as practical joke, results in Long Island woman's murder and gives Basil Willing tough nut to crack.	Psychiatrist detectives final arrival at unexpected answer to problem involving deafness, kleptomania, and moral decay portrayed with plentiful suspense and excellent writing.	Sterling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Last December, with the publication of *The Bride Wore Black*, *The Gory Gazette* presented its citation of Past-Master-in-the-Fine-Art-of-Hair-Raising to CORNELL WOOLRICH.

Now, with the publication of his new book, *The Black Curtain*—CORNELL WOOLRICH gets his Masters Degree from less prejudiced authorities.

WILLIAM LYON PHELPS says: "*The Black Curtain* is magnificent — a steady succession of thrills."

JOHN KOBLER, in PM says: "Not even HAMMETT can distill a purer concentrate of horror and suspense than WOOLRICH. *The Black Curtain* is his best yet. For sheer un-put-downableness this should cop every prize in sight."

The Dagger-thru-the-Heart Department is still reeling from the impact of *The Black Curtain*. The typesetters who printed the book are all having nervous breakdowns. But *The Gory Gazette* assures its readers (who, if they're still reading *The Gory Gazette* after all these months, *must* be made of stern stuff) that they'll be able to scurry through *The Black Curtain* with no more than a 50% jump in their pulses.

AIRY NOTE. *The Gory Gazette's Radio Editor recommends The Inner Sanctum Mystery broadcasts on Sunday nights at 8:30 over NBC's Blue network. Listeners will be pleasantly palpitated by such luminaries as* BORIS KARLOFF *and* PAUL LUKAS, *then soothed by* RAYMOND, *urbane host of the show.*

MCCURDLE, a stickler for having the last word, insists that *any* night in the week is the perfect time to turn on all the lights, look under all the beds, lock all the doors, and read

THE BLACK CURTAIN
by Cornell Woolrich ($2)

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THE NEW BOOKS

(*Continued from page* 20)

ably not be passed through the mails but this writer has dealt lightly with the pharmaceutical angles of the drug-store business in favor of some lengthy discussions of his father's religious and political beliefs. The man was a deist and a socialist but it has been half a century since such mild liberalisms were sensational.

The chemist of this story had a shop for some time in what used to be called "The District" of a Pennsylvania mining town. He certainly had better stories than his son has remembered here. Such romantic and impolite preparations as the common ones of mercury, ergot, the fabulous cantharides, chloral hydrate, etc., are mentioned but their treatment as social implements in such a locale as the one described is parsimonious and naive. Even the toxicology is primitive; all of us who read detective stories know better than to use arsenic.

P. S.

Travel

PINON COUNTRY. By Haniel Long. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1941. 327 *pp.* $3.

This is second in a series on "American Folkways" edited by Erskine Caldwell. It deals with the Mexican village down in New Mexico and Arizona, and in spite of an engaging pseudo-naivete of manner, we are afraid that it comes a little too close to the truth to be literature; that is, it is lurid and deals principally with drugs, outlaws, and sudden death. However, it has some handsome panoramas and some of the philosophical notes are very astute—as Keyserling losing respect for the philosophy of Kant after he saw the Grand Canyon. It was something that was simply too big to be covered by dialectics.

The book is not intended to hang together closely but it does not seem to hang together even loosely; dissociated impressions will sometimes give a reader the feeling of a place if he catches even occasional glimpses of an integral character but it is far to seek a relationship between Coronado, peyote, the Mormons, Schlatter, marijuana, Bronson Cutting, corn, small town riots, and the Carlsbad Caverns.

"The Saga of Billy the Kid" is a better book about that homicidal infant, La Barre is better on peyote cults, any reliable "Materia Medica" is much better on the over-romanticized *marijuana,* Michelson is better on Indians, Wiener is better on maize—it comes to the general statement that in anthropolgy or sociology a solid piece of beef is better than a bucket of hash.

P. S.

RENO. By Max Miller. Dodd, Mead. 1941. 267 *pp.* $3.

The one Reno of the several Reno's that space the continent is to be immediately recognized in unqualified mention, like Hollywood. Its earned repute derives from the follow-up of the early Nevada state laws which, to make a showing of voters, provided citizenship upon a six months' term of residence.

The Thing, as it is styled for short, occurred without prevision. A divorce might be obtained in six months under the Nevada statutes which were rather liberal as to grounds for action. Reno got the jump, we may say, upon competitors. By long practice the bar attained such proficiency in disposing of the imported business that the Reno system is dominant over the lures of rival communities which would cut in. An attorney in the East may telephone an attorney in Reno, state his client's case, and hear a spot opinion, yes or no.

While probing all angles of business and society in Reno, Mr. Miller also covers the background region; for the old days, of the mining booms, the staging and Indian periods of Western Nevada, are part of Reno's atmosphere.

"Reno" is a representative Miller job of comprehensive—and racy—reporting.

E. L. S.

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By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

■	1-X	2-N	3-U	4-C	5-H	6-I	■	7-D	8-W	■	9-G	10-E	■	11-W	12-M	13-F
14-J	■	15-O	16-I	17-B	■	18-G	19-I	20-D	■	21-T	■	22-X	23-J	24-P	25-M	26-S
27-Y	28-Q	29-V	30-C	31-A	■	32-X	33-E	34-T	35-M	36-D	37-Q	38-S	39-G	40-C	41-W	■
42-X	43-T	44-J	45-Q	46-U	47-W	48-F	■	49-S	50-R	51-B	52-T	53-D	■	54-U	55-A	56-J
57-P	58-Y	59-Q	60-C	61-V	■	62-L	63-H	64-T	65-B	■	66-S	67-T	68-A	■	69-K	■
70-X	71-R	72-D	73-M	74-J	75-L	76-P	77-Y	■	78-G	79-R	■	80-C	81-N	82-D	83-Q	84-V
85-Y	86-L	87-U	88-X	89-P	90-O	■	91-L	92-D	93-X	94-M	95-V	96-U	97-S	98-T	99-G	100-F
■	101-D	102-W	■	103-S	104-B	105-E	■	106-P	107-K	108-Y	109-F	110-G	■	111-Y	112-S	113-K
■	114-O	115-K	116-A	117-G	■	118-E	■	119-O	120-W	121-F	122-K	■	123-M	124-F	125-C	■
126-V	127-K	128-W	■	129-E	130-F	■	131-C	132-I	133-K	■	134-O	135-V	136-Q	137-H	138-S	139-X
140-U	■	141-E	142-D	■	143-T	144-K	145-B	■	146-I	147-Y	148-W	149-T	150-E	151-N	■	152-T
153-M	154-J	155-D	156-P	157-X	158-O	159-S	■	160-H	161-Q	■	162-Q	163-J	164-I	165-P	166-C	167-A
■	168-X	169-R	170-L	171-T	■	172-A	173-K	174-W	■	175-L	176-Y	177-X	178-R	179-Q	180-N	181-S

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 17 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Salt, smoke, dry (bacon).

B. Effect of past experience which persists and recurs.

C. Coin used for Maundy money.

D. Braggart.

E. Meagreness, tenuity.

F. Small vessel used to watch an enemy (naut.)

G. Darken as with shade.

H. Money (slang).

I. City and river in Washington State.

J. River of woe in Hades.

K. Brazen serpent (Bib., *Kings XVIII*).

L. Horselaugh.

M. Introit of mass for the dead.

N. Inspiring fear, as of ghosts.

O. Jehovah.

P. Stuffed footstool.

Q. Unreal, whimsical.

R. Spy column.

S. Character in *Ivanhoe*.

T. Order of insects as butterflies.

U. Scottish comedian and songwriter (1870—).

V. Offer a higher price than.

W. Eolith (anthropol.; 2 wds.)

X. Decorates, adorns.

Y. Empowered by Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem (Bib.)

WORDS

	31 172 55 68 116 167
	17 104 145 65 51
	125 131 166 80 4 30 40 60
	72 101 155 20 92 142 36 7 53 82
	10 33 118 150 129 141 105
	121 48 100 109 13 130 124
	99 117 9 110 78 18 39
	5 160 137 63
	6 132 146 16 164 19
	56 44 14 23 154 163 74
	173 122 144 127 133 115 107 69 113
	75 91 170 62 86 175
	25 35 94 153 12 73 123
	81 2 180 151
	90 134 15 114 158 119
	156 89 76 106 165 24 57
	161 179 28 136 45 83 59 37 162
	79 169 178 71 50
	103 49 66 181 97 159 26 112 138 38
	98 43 152 67 149 64 34 143 171 52 21
	87 96 46 140 54 3
	84 95 135 126 29 61
	174 120 11 102 47 128 8 148 41
	93 1 42 32 168 177 88 157 22 139 70
	85 176 77 27 111 147 58 108

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TRADE WINDS

THE news commentators and the book publishers may seem to have cornered the market on human-interest and action stories from the British home front, but there is a certain aspect of that struggle which is too little known and which comes within our line of duty as a literary magazine. We received not long ago a nearly-complete file of *Horizon,* an English "review of literature and art" edited by Cyril Connolly which appeared first in January 1940, although planned before the war.

★ ★

☞A few highlights from recent issues: T. S. Eliot's two letters to *The Times* criticizing its obituary of James Joyce, which *The Times* never published; an anonymous letter from France detailing conditions and sentiments there, and smuggled out by some secret means; four beautiful photographs by Cecil Beaton of London after bombing.

★ ★

☞The time for mid-summer resolutions is here. Vacationists are filled with good intentions. One resolves to catch up on one's reading and ponder what to take along. For ourselves we're pretty well set. First, we want to pack "The Fortunes of Dr. Mahoney" by Henry Handel Richardson. This trilogy came to the attention of American readers some fifteen years ago, and it is one of those books we've always intended to get to but never have. Mrs. Richardson, one of Australia's most gifted novelists, is an exciting experience to meet and read. It is good to know that others feel as we do, since *The Readers Club* has chosen this title for its May selection.

★ ★

☞We'll take along, too, the new single volume edition of "The Books of Charles Fort," with an introduction by Tiffany Thayer. Here is a character that completely baffles reader and critic, and to have to label and classify his fantastic researches and revelations requires a Nostradamus. Charles Fort believed in nothing. He set down certain indisputable facts and defied the scientist to offer an explanation. It rained frogs in Ireland, Kokomo, Indiana, and in Brighton, England on, let's say, June 7, 1892. "Why?" asked Mr. Fort. In France, in certain areas, it rained stones in *increased slowliness,* as they reached the ground. "Why?"—asked Mr. Fort. Mr. Fort didn't know—he just recorded the facts. Eminent scientist didn't know and, of course, we're entirely out of it. Magnificent bafflement.

★ ★

☞We think too much "escape" reading makes people nervous, and that an occasional change of fare to the scholarly and attention-demanding clears the brain and toughens its sinews: such as G. I. Duthie's *The "Bad" Quarto of Hamlet* (Cambridge-Macmillan) which deals with the aristocrat of academic detective stories, the pirated First Quarto; or a more frivolous Yale publication, Albert Feuillerat's *Baudelaire et La Belle aux Cheveux d'Or,* bound in blue with a pink spine, which sums up research upon one of Baudelaire's little-known love affairs.

★ ★

☞Hail to *The Pierian Spring,* the new Newssheet about books, published by the University of California Press. We are in receipt of Vol. 1, No. 1, and we place it alongside the ever-scholarly release of the Columbia University Press. It is pleasant, indeed, to note the changes in publicity releases these past few years. The undiplomatic blurbs of the past have made way for genuine, informative news. The writing is of high order and the various dissertations on books are of honest comment. So we send off "Ceremonial Costumes of the Pueblo Indians" by Virginia More Roediger, with preface by J. Allardyce Nicoll. The book is a wholly impressive presentation of the beginning of the ceremonial costumes of the Pueblo Indians, relating the evolution and significance of the dress and prayer drama of the Hopi, Zuni, and Rio Grande peoples. Turquoise dance moccasins, bright blankets, tableted headdresses of the maidens, evergreen wands, corn-dancers, eagle, buffalo, and deer lead one into the early and primitive civilization of Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona. Forty color plates accompany the text and publication is due July 1st.

★ ★

☞In a concentration camp in Canada there is a German prisoner, a former flight sergeant in the *Luftwaffe.* His name is Gottfried Leake, and from a series of letters which he wrote while in prison comes a book in the form of a diary, relating his experiences from May 1940, when the Nazis marched into Belgium and Holland until January, 1941, when the author bailed out in England. The material, which is being edited by Curt Riess, will be published by The Dial Press under the title "I Was a Nazi Flier."

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